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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
About Dreams. By <i>C. E. Lawrence</i>	589
Acrostics. No. 153	128
— No. 154	256
— No. 155	384
— No. 156	512
— No. 157	640
— No. 158	768
<i>Almedingen, E. M.</i> : A Philosopher on Board	87
<i>Anderson, Ethel</i> : To-night, Unsung	239
Apollo Speaks. By <i>E. M. Walker</i>	564
Athens and Its Life To-day By <i>Sir Charles Petrie, Bt.</i>	209
Autumn Day among the Birds, An. By <i>J. M. Craster</i>	421
<i>Barnes, G. M.</i> : Flower Superstitions	301
<i>Barritt, E. Lloyd</i> : A Possession for Ever	735
<i>Barter, Dorothea</i> : Kensington Square	435
<i>Bathurst, K.</i> : Statuesque	526
Bells of Bethlehem, The. By <i>Archer Cust</i>	641
Bends the Road Over a Hill? By <i>Eleanor Williams-Moore</i>	284
Big Toby. By <i>Ewen K. Patterson</i>	578
Birds and Shepherds in Autumn. By <i>Owen Hamilton</i>	270
Birds of an Indian Garden. By <i>Lt.-Col. A. H. E. Mosse, C.I.E.</i>	181
'Black Tom.' By <i>Oliver Warner</i>	93
<i>Bluen, Herbert</i> . Winter Consolation	683
<i>Blyton, W. J.</i> : This Was a Man	196
— — — Pastoral	445
Bret Harte—A Centenary Portrait. By <i>Geoffrey Bret Harte</i>	168
<i>Bridgen, Monica M.</i> : To a Seagull	67
<i>Bridges, Lt.-Gen. Sir Tom, K.C.B.</i> : The Sirens of Silverdam	150
Bur, The. By <i>Josephine Johnson</i>	682
Call of the West, A. By <i>W. A. Donaldson</i>	103
Calling the Tune. By <i>W. F. K. Henson</i>	341
Carol. By <i>Hesper Le Gallienne</i>	648
<i>Chapman-Huston, Desmond</i> . Idlings in a Royal Library	672
Charm of an Old English Cottage, The. By <i>Mabel Dawson</i>	727
Chastening, The. By <i>Sir Charles Sherrington, O.M.</i>	140
Church in the Floods, The. By <i>Anthony ffettyplace</i>	563
<i>Cluer, Elisabeth</i> : Farewell and Adieu to You	714
<i>Colenutt, R.</i> : Joseph Conrad—Twelve Years After	129
Conrad, Joseph—Twelve Years After. By <i>Richard Colenutt</i>	129

	PAGE
Consolation. By <i>Joan Eastman</i> . . . . .	112
Cornhill, The: Old and New . . . . .	734
<i>Craster, J. M.</i> : An Autumn Day Among the Birds	421
'Crécy.' By <i>William Van Straubenzee</i> . . . . .	67
<i>Crouch, Col. the Hon. R. A.</i> : Tips . . . . .	541
<i>Cust, Archer</i> The Bells of Bethlehem . . . . .	641
<i>Daly, M. de B.</i> : Interlude at Sant'Anna . . . . .	477
D'Arblays in July, 1815, The. By <i>A. J. Wauchope</i> . . . . .	25
<i>Dart, Vera</i> . Tramps in the Pyrenees . . . . .	223
<i>Dawson, Mabel</i> . The Charm of an Old English Cottage . . . . .	727
Dead Leaves. By <i>T. Weston Ramsey</i> . . . . .	577
Departure. By <i>M. C. G. Hooton</i> . . . . .	444
Deserts, The. By <i>C. S. Jarvis</i> . . . . .	649
<i>Donaldson, W. A.</i> : A Call of the West . . . . .	103
Dream, The. By <i>Cecil Martin</i> . . . . .	218
Dugong-Hunters, The. By <i>C. C. Vyvyan</i> . . . . .	366
<i>Eastman, Joan</i> : Consolation . . . . .	112
<i>Eastwick, Ivy O.</i> : Shadow and Song . . . . .	24
Errant Genius, An. By <i>Muriel Kent</i> . . . . .	565
Farewell and Adieu to You. By <i>Elisabeth Cluer</i> . . . . .	714
<i>Fergusson, James</i> 'Shut Up by Act of Parliament' . . . . .	68
<i>ffjettyplace, Anthony</i> . The Church in the Floods . . . . .	563
<i>Fisher, Lettice</i> : Indian Memories . . . . .	344
<i>Fitzgerald, Gerald</i> : Mr. Cassidy Again . . . . .	246
Flower Superstitions. By <i>G. M. Barnes</i> . . . . .	301
<i>Gallienne, Hesper Le</i> : Carol . . . . .	648
<i>Gardner, Mona</i> : You Can Have Your Head . . . . .	549
<i>Garvin, Katharine</i> : Holy Palmers' Kiss . . . . .	343
Ghosts of Old Peking. By <i>Danièle Varè</i> . . . . .	141
Glory and Loveliness Have Passed Away. By <i>Margaret Stanley-Wrench</i>	305
<i>Gorell, Lord</i> : Lines on Holding a Lock of Keats's Hair . . . . .	443
——— The Year is Dying . . . . .	762
Gran Turismo. By <i>A. K. Wickham</i> . . . . .	1
Grandfather, The. By <i>C. M. Mallet</i> . . . . .	420
<i>Grey, H. M.</i> : Old London Coffee-Houses . . . . .	493
<i>Griff, Alan</i> : Hair of the Earth . . . . .	603
Hair of the Earth. By <i>Alan Griff</i> . . . . .	603
<i>Hanson, Nell</i> : The Lark to His Nest . . . . .	357

	PAGE
<i>Hamilton, E.</i> : The Victim . . . . .	756
<i>Hamilton, Owen</i> : Birds and Shepherds in Autumn . . . . .	270
<i>Harte, Geoffrey Bret</i> : Bret Harte—A Centenary Portrait . . . . .	168
<i>Hartley</i> . By <i>Iris Origo</i> . . . . .	77
Hedgehog Harvest. By <i>Phyllis Kelway</i> . . . . .	14
<i>Henson, W. F. K.</i> : Calling the Tune . . . . .	341
<i>Hives, E. M.</i> : The Lover and the Poet . . . . .	245
Holy Palmers' Kiss. By <i>Katharine Garvin</i> . . . . .	343
Homeward Bound. By <i>Vice-Admiral S. H. Radcliffe, C.M.G.</i> . . . .	208
<i>Hooton, M. C. G.</i> : Departure . . . . .	444
I Saw Her Pass. By <i>Marjorie E. Pullers</i> . . . . .	701
Idlings in a Royal Library. By <i>Desmond Chapman-Huston</i> . . . . .	672
In Search of the Modern Smuggler. By <i>Henry T. F. Rhodes</i> . . . . .	470
Indian Memories. By <i>Lettice Fisher</i> . . . . .	344
Inheritance. By <i>Margaret A. Watson</i> . . . . .	274
Interlude at Sant'Anna. By <i>M. de B. Daly</i> . . . . .	477
<i>Jackson, Grace</i> . Midnight on the Lake . . . . .	306
<i>Jarvis, C. S.</i> : Where the War Was Good . . . . .	257
— — — With the Gun in Egypt : I. The Nile Valley . . . . .	513
— — — II. The Deserts . . . . .	649
<i>Jenkins, Alan</i> : Willow Pattern . . . . .	33
<i>Johnson, Josephine</i> : The Bur . . . . .	682
Joseph Conrad—Twelve Years After. By <i>Richard Colenutt</i> . . . . .	129
Keats's Hair, Lines on Holding a Lock of. By <i>Lord Gorell</i> . . . . .	443
<i>Kelway, Phyllis</i> : Hedgehog Harvest . . . . .	14
Kensington Square. By <i>Dorothea Barter</i> . . . . .	435
<i>Kent, Muriel</i> : An Errant Genius . . . . .	565
<i>Kerr, James</i> : Walking—And Some of its Famous Votaries . . . . .	240
<i>Korel, Natalia</i> : London Interlude . . . . .	661
Lark to His Nest, The. By <i>Nell Hanson</i> . . . . .	357
<i>Latham, H. G. D.</i> : Rugby in the Early 'Eighties . . . . .	702
<i>Lawrence, C. E.</i> : About Dreams . . . . .	589
<i>Lee, Amice</i> : Recollections of Octavia Hill . . . . .	313
<i>Lees, Beatrice A.</i> : Pre-Victorian Scrapbooks . . . . .	113
<i>Likeman, Helen</i> : William Tyndale . . . . .	529
Lines on Holding a Lock of Keats's Hair. By <i>Lord Gorell</i> . . . . .	443
London Interlude. By <i>Natalia Korel</i> . . . . .	661
Lover and the Poet, The. By <i>E. M. Hives</i> . . . . .	245

	PAGE
<i>Lucas, F. L.</i> : Madame de Malitourn's Cold . . . .	684
<i>Lyde, Professor L. W.</i> : Time and the Hour . . . .	463
<i>Lyell, Denis D.</i> : That Young Deil . . . .	629
<i>Macdonald, Robert M.</i> : The River of Silver . . .	307
— — — Path of the Pygmy Priests . . . .	533
Madame de Malitourn's Cold. By <i>F. L. Lucas</i> . . .	684
<i>Mallet, C. M.</i> : The Grandfather . . . .	420
Market Day at Karangia. By <i>Jane Woodman</i> . . .	54
<i>Martin, Cecil</i> : The Dream . . . .	218
<i>McGregor, Hon. A. J.</i> : The Tortoise and the Hare . .	503
<i>McMullen, Anna</i> : Trafalgar Square . . . .	283
<i>Meller, Margaret</i> : Old Martha . . . .	100
Midnight on the Lake. By <i>Grace Jackson</i> . . .	306
Modern Smuggler, In Search of the. By <i>Henry T. F. Rhodes</i>	470
Moriturus. By <i>Willoughby Weaving</i> . . . .	507
<i>Mosse, Lt.-Col. A. H. E., C.I.E.</i> : Birds of an Indian Garden	181
Mr. Cassidy Again. By <i>Gerald Fitzgerald</i> . . .	246
<i>Nichols, Wallace B.</i> : Two Days with the Devil . . .	385
Nile Valley, The. By <i>C. S. Jarvis</i> . . . .	513
No Trumpets. By <i>F. Sandford Wilton</i> . . . .	191
Octavia Hill, Recollections of. By <i>Amice Lee</i> . . .	313
Old English Cottage, The Charm of an. By <i>Mabel Dawson</i>	727
Old London Coffee-Houses. By <i>H. M. Grey</i> . . . .	493
Old Martha. By <i>Margaret Meller</i> . . . .	100
<i>Origo, Iris</i> : Hartley . . . .	77
Pastoral. By <i>W. J. Blyton</i> . . . .	445
Path of the Pygmy Priests. By <i>Robert M. Macdonald</i> .	533
<i>Patterson, Ewen K.</i> : Big Toby . . . .	578
<i>Petrie, Sir Charles, Bt.</i> : Athens and Its Life To-day . .	209
Philosopher on Board, A. By <i>E. M. Almedingen</i> . . .	87
<i>Pillers, Marjorie E.</i> : I Saw Her Pass . . . .	701
Possession for Ever, A. By <i>E. Lloyd Barrutt</i> . . .	735
Pre-Victorian Scrapbooks. By <i>Beatrice A. Lees</i> . . .	113
<i>Radcliffe, Vice-Admiral S. H., C.M.G.</i> : Homeward Bound . .	208
<i>Ramsey, T. Weston</i> : Dead Leaves . . . .	577
Reprieve. By <i>C. C. Vyryan</i> . . . .	72
<i>Rhodes, Henry T. F.</i> : In Search of the Modern Smuggler . .	470
<i>Rhodes, Margaret Elizabeth</i> : Who Sits for Warmth . . .	560

	PAGE
<i>Ricks, Cappy</i> : Shanties . . . . .	350
River of Silver, The. By <i>Robert M. Macdonald</i> . . . . .	307
Royal Library, Idlings in a. By <i>Desmond Chapman-Huston</i> . . . . .	672
Rugby in the Early 'Eighties. By <i>H. G. D. Latham</i> . . . . .	702
Running Brooks, The . . . . .	124, 252, 380, 508, 635, 763
Sail Comes Back. By <i>C. Fox Smith</i> . . . . .	327
Seagull, To a. By <i>Monica M. Bridgen</i> . . . . .	67
Shadow and Song. By <i>Ivy O. Eastwick</i> . . . . .	24
Shanties. By <i>Cappy Ricks</i> . . . . .	350
<i>Sherrington, Sir Charles, O.M.</i> : The Chastening . . . . .	140
'Shut Up By Act of Parliament.' By <i>James Fergusson</i> . . . . .	68
Sirens of Silverdam, The. By <i>Lt.-Gen. Sir Tom Bridges, K.C.B.</i> . . . .	150
<i>Smith, C. Fox</i> : Sail Comes Back . . . . .	327
Split Sticks. By <i>Lawrence Waterman</i> . . . . .	332
<i>Stanley-Wrench, Margaret</i> : Glory and Loveliness Have Passed Away	305
Statuesque. By <i>K. Bathurst</i> . . . . .	526
<i>Straubenzee, William Van</i> : 'Crécy' . . . . .	67
That Young Deil. By <i>Denis D. Lyell</i> . . . . .	629
This Was a Man. By <i>W. J. Blyton</i> . . . . .	196
Time and the Hour. By <i>Prof. L. W. Lyde</i> . . . . .	463
Tips. By <i>Col. the Hon. R. A. Crouch</i> . . . . .	541
To-night, Unsung. By <i>Ethel Anderson</i> . . . . .	239
Tortoise and the Hare, The. By <i>The Hon. A. J. McGregor</i> . . . . .	503
Trafalgar Square. By <i>Anna McMullen</i> . . . . .	283
Tramps in the Pyrenees. By <i>Vera Dart</i> . . . . .	223
Tribune de Paris, La. By <i>Herbert A. Walton</i> . . . . .	599
Two Days with the Devil. By <i>Wallace B. Nichols</i> . . . . .	385
<i>Varè, Daniele</i> : Ghosts of Old Peking . . . . .	141
Victim, The. By <i>E. Hamilton</i> . . . . .	756
<i>Vyryan, C. C.</i> : Reprieve . . . . .	72
—— The Dugong-Hunters . . . . .	366
<i>Walker, E. M.</i> : Apollo Speaks . . . . .	564
Walking—And Some of its Famous Votaries By <i>James Kerr</i> . . . . .	240
<i>Walton, Herbert A.</i> : La Tribune de Paris . . . . .	599
<i>Warner, Oliver</i> : 'Black Tom' . . . . .	93
<i>Waterman, Lawrence</i> : Split Sticks . . . . .	332
<i>Watson, Margaret A.</i> : Inheritance . . . . .	274
<i>Wauchope, A. J.</i> : The D'Arblays in July, 1815 . . . . .	25
<i>Weaving, Willoughby</i> : Moriturus . . . . .	507
Where the War was Good. By <i>Major C. S. Jarvis</i> . . . . .	257



	PAGE
Who Sits for Warmth. By <i>Margaret Elizabeth Rhodes</i> . . .	560
<i>Wickham, A. K.</i> : Gran Turismo . . . . .	1
William Tyndale. By <i>Helen Likeman</i> . . . . .	529
<i>Williams-Moore, Eleanor</i> · Bends the Road over a Hill ? . .	284
Willow Pattern. By <i>Alan Jenkins</i> . . . . .	33
<i>Wilton, F. Sandford</i> · No Trumpets . . . . .	191
Winter Consolation. By <i>Herbert Bluen</i> . . . . .	683
With the Gun in Egypt. By <i>C. S. Jarvis</i> . I. The Nile Valley . .	513
—— ——— II. The Deserts . . . . .	649
<i>Woodman, Jane</i> . Market Day at Karangia . . . . .	54
 Year is Dying, The. By <i>Lord Gorell</i> . . . . .	 762
You Can Have Your Head. By <i>Mona Gardner</i> . . . . .	549

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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JULY 1936.

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*GRAN TURISMO.*

BY A. K. WICKHAM.

RECENT events have once again thrown Central Europe into prominence. Here, where Slav, Latin and Teuton mingle and clash, lie the worst of Europe's political problems, but the interest of this region is not exhausted by politics. The political storm was clearly brewing in Italy a year ago and could be seen by anyone with eyes, although it was strangely invisible to our Government or criminally ignored by our Foreign Office: it was a black and menacing cloud, but it was fairly distant still, and it lay on one horizon only: one cursed and turned one's back on it. Moreover, one might have been permitted the doubt whether in the end the Italians had so great a power to disturb the world and themselves, or whether we should let ourselves be so greatly disturbed for their sake. Something else all over Italy and far beyond it was more constant and ubiquitous and gave some consistency to a journey whose itinerary was in the main shaped by the common motives of the tourist, art and country.

This thing was the Roman Catholic Church, whose ultimate strength does not lie in the brilliance of its statesmen but in its hold over the common people. The devotion which in six countries it inspires in them, by arts both new and old, was one of my chief impressions last summer. My route was roughly as follows:

Through northern France and Switzerland to the Carrara region (near Spezia); thence through Florence and Siena to Umbria; to Rome for the Canonisation of More and Fisher (this was my only definite religious objective); a month in Umbria and the Marches (it was in the inn at Urbino that I overheard my modest travels ironically described by the words which form the title to this account); thence through Venice over the Tarvis across Austria to the Danube at Melk; Vienna; Lake Balaton; Budapest; the Hungarian Puzta; the Tatra Mountains of Slovakia; a raid into Poland at Krakow; Prague; across Central Germany through Verdun to Paris for the last day of the Italian Exhibition; a first visit to the battlefields since the War, and home. A hundred days. The ground which I covered is large, the time short, and my im-

pressions perhaps superficial, but here, for what they are worth, are some of the scenes which come to my mind.

On two evenings, at a time when our English crowds fill the cinemas, the Italian cinemas were empty. On a Wednesday in Lent there was only standing room in the Cathedral at Cremona at a service for the children who were to be confirmed next day. A Dominican preacher of extraordinary eloquence was the evident attraction. He spoke at great length on 'l'amore di Dio' and, although his arguments were commonplace in the extreme, his energy and gestures—they were quite unusual even in Italy—were visibly applauded. With a flourish of triumph he would uncover his platitudes in places where from the start one had seen him conceal them. He was very fat, and the pauses (some of those 'absolutely necessary pauses') in which he craved the indulgence of his hearers while he mopped his brow and neck were not the least popular parts of his discourse, for popular it undoubtedly was. The Church can still gratify the Italian taste for oratory and Italian preaching has resources well suited to an ingenuous people. I have been told how at a little town in the Carrara district it was the custom during Lent to set up an extra pulpit in the church. In it was placed a priest vested to represent the devil, whose arguments against the Faith were demolished by the parroco from the pulpit opposite to the delight of the congregation. In the Duomo at Florence some years ago when the fear and memory of the Austrians was still strong, I heard a preacher use a similar but more subtle device well calculated to enlist patriotism also on his side. He told how before the War he had studied at the Austrian university of Graz and how he had disputed with an agnostic professor there. This man he now revived to fill the rôle of *advocatus diaboli*, and rebutted each of his arguments triumphantly, beginning each crushing blow with the ironical address 'O egregio professore di Grazi,' in that case, can you tell me, O illustrious professor of Graz. . . .

Cremona, where the fat Dominican was so eloquent on this evening in Lent, is an industrial city in the Lombard Plain. I happened to be in Tolentino, a remote mountain town in the Marches, on the Feast of the Ascension. This is a place chiefly known for its patron saint, San Nicola, and for the shrine in his church there which is richly decorated with some interesting fourteenth-century frescoes which I had come to see. S. Nicola's sanctity and miracles are of a very conventional order, but his

cult appears to have had recently a remarkable revival. From my room in the inn on the outskirts of the town I saw fireworks going up on the hillside opposite. A band was playing and everyone was streaming out in that direction. I followed and found them collected about a dull little chapel, built about 1850, on the side of the road. There was only room for a few worshippers inside at a time, but these were elbowing each other in and out continually, and rendering their devotions before a sacred oleographic type of picture of the Virgin. The rockets were going up cheerfully on the other side of the road, and, right up against the chapel windows within five or six yards of the sacred picture and its devotees, a brass band played lively secular tunes with extreme loudness and vigour. It was one of those minglings of the worldly and the divine which come to Italians with a charming naturalness and which, despite every warning, surprise our northern susceptibilities and our departmental minds. Of this I was witness of an example in S. Peter's itself at the most solemn part in one of the most pompous ceremonies of the world, a Papal Mass at a Canonisation. The Pope was beneath the dome between Bernini's twisted columns surrounded by the glittering vestments of the cardinals, bishops and priests of all degrees, and of the long files of the Noble Guard. Two priests coming from opposite directions, whose duties took them to some tables at the side of the altar, happened to meet; they had, I suppose, not seen each other for some days, for they shook each other warmly by the hand, and, within a few feet of the Vicar of Christ, and within view of some thousands of the faithful, they pleasantly passed the time of day for a minute or two before resuming their sacred functions.

It was good for an Englishman who never loved Henry VIII to see the supreme honours paid to the most illustrious of his victims, and that especially at a time when elsewhere the totalitarian state is again attacking the liberties of the Church and of conscience. It was amusing too to attend a reception given by our minister at the Vatican in honour of the event, and to see him also among the official congregation in S. Peter's. If Henry VIII did no penance at the shrine—how one would have liked to see that—at least his successor has made polite amends four hundred years later. I had expected and hoped that the celebration of this event would be worthy of the occasion, but I was disappointed. The principal actors are after all Italians, and where many Italians appear formally in public there are always many elements of

bathos. The one which I have described was not alone. Many of the cardinals are far from impressive and one of them seemed to be a popular figure of fun. As he sang the 'ite, missa est,' his voice continually cracked and there was an audible titter among the vast congregation. The service too is prodigiously long. The Gospel, for instance, is said both in Latin and in Greek, and, except for the time when the trumpets in the dome announce the Consecration, there is hardly any music other than unaccompanied Gregorian singing. The only organ would hardly do justice to a large English parish church. It is strange that our Anglican ritual should be almost entirely musical while that of the Italians is chiefly visual, although it is commonly thought that the Italians are more musical, and we have what I may be forgiven for calling a better parade value. Only once in an Italian church have I found any pleasure in their singing. It was an unforgettable experience to hear the Creed chanted in the Lower Church at Assisi. Here at last was a perfect reverence, a perfect training and a perfect setting.

It seems still true to-day that it is not in Rome or nearest it that one has the finest impression of the Roman Church. I have never attended any of the more important provincial Festivals or Pardons like those at Assisi or Palermo where devotion is said to rise to ecstasy, which have so often been described, and by no one better than by Gregorovius, who saw them during the last years of the old régime. By all accounts they flourish still. In such festivals as I have seen the element of the popular holiday has predominated. That of S. Catherine of Siena, for instance, when her street is richly decorated with flags, an altar is placed across the road opposite her house and visitors throng the very snug little home where every room now seems to be fitted up as a chapel: or best of all, S. Ubaldo of Gubbio. It may interest or sadden those who remember the charming story of S. Francis and the wolf of that town to learn that only a few years ago wolves ate one of its postmen. Gubbio is one of the most perfect of medieval cities. It is very small, built on the steep side of a mountain, and on ordinary days, as I found when I went again later, it is empty and deserted, but on the feast of the patron saint they are all mad, 'sono tutti matti', in Gubbio, as I was told in Fano. S. Ubaldo was a bishop of theirs in the twelfth century, led their armies to battle and won an astonishing number of victories. On the Festival there is a fair and circus at the foot of the hill. A

man with a large snake twirled round him invited us to see his beast being fed. It was, he said, a very valuable educational and scientific experience and we were lucky, as it only fed once in a month or so, but then it ate a lot. The food offered was a live guinea-pig of the Abyssinian sort which I used to keep as pets as a child. I was incredulous or nastily curious enough to pay my lira and I wish I hadn't. This ought to be stopped, I thought, as I came away. Had the Anglo-Irish woman whom I met a month later in Ravenna been there she would have gone to the Carabinieri, to the Prefetto, to Mussolini himself. She gave me a great admiration for our people. She was shocked, and quite rightly, by the way in which the poultry and lambs are tied up in the market after sale and she would not leave until she had a promise of an improvement from the head of the Police, and this at a time when the Italian Press was filling with abuse and mockery of the pretensions and hypocrisy of the English. But if she could read it, she took no notice, and she treated the Italians just as we have always treated them in the past, like children or natives. Her courage astonished me, her insensitiveness to all but the sufferings of animals even more.

To return to S. Ubaldo. I was in Gubbio for the Festa dei Ceri, the day when they are all mad in Gubbio. There were large crowds in the straight streets along the hillside and they collected mostly round three heavy cone-shaped standards on the tops of each of which was the brightly painted figure of a saint. Each of these standards or *ceri* presently came whirling into the principal square where on one side a breastwork overlooks a little cup in the mountains. On the other they rise steeply behind. The *Ceri* were led by a mounted swordsman and each carried by some twenty men. They circled three times round the centre of the piazza amid great applause and then went away up the hillside, S. Ubaldo's *cero* naturally leading. It is supposed to be a race, but as the paths are not only steep but very narrow, to pass would be impossible, and it was generally admitted and desired that S. Ubaldo, who always started first, should always win. The goal is a chapel some four hundred feet up, and from the piazza below we could follow the little mitred figure, its cloak fluttering in the wind, being hustled in and out of the trees and round the corners until it emerged by the platform by the chapel and the bells began ringing.

Another victory for S. Ubaldo, and doubtless many more guinea-

pigs had been sacrificed below in the service of enlightenment and science. An hour or so before the race began we had entered the cathedral. The bishop and some dozen clergy were at benediction. The service was conducted with meticulous ritual. The golden vestments were superb; the congregation curiously absent.

One of many other Italian ceremonies which I have seen I must mention, for it seemed to be continuing all the time I was in Siena and was very popular. Each May the favourite image of one of the *contrade* of the city is exposed on a special altar in the middle of the Duomo. Small children are brought to be placed before it and other objects too. A Franciscan stands there and a ceaseless stream of little brats and of parcels of all sizes, containing heaven knows what, is handed up to him. He lifts each of them before the image, makes the sign of the cross with them and gives the children a relic to kiss. This ceremony was pleasantly and reverently conducted.

The variety of the rites and the local practices of the Church in Italy is undoubtedly one cause of her appeal to Italians, as it is of her attraction to foreigners. In our own Church the monotony and uniformity of ceremony stands in unpleasing contrast to the enterprise and multiplicity of doctrine. Even though Russia was Holy Russia once and is now the country of the anti-God museums, I cannot see Italy going the same way, as some fear if Fascism collapses. To put it at its lowest, the organisation of the Church is much stronger and is much less dependent on the State. Moreover, something of patriotic pride now comes to this great Italian institution. Even since the Lateran Treaty, which many think has made the connection much too close and whose value to Mussolini is now so obvious, the Pope has been at pains to assert the Church's rights and independent existence. I should not say the clergy are popular—I have seen evidence to the contrary; but they are an essential element in society and there are many who think that they are its best and most intelligent members. Certainly I have seen a few who have all the marks of saintly or exceptional men, among them Pius XI himself and above all the Secretary of State, Cardinal Pacelli.

When one comes over the Tarvis from Italy into Austria one is aware of one of the real frontiers of the nations. Almost instantly the country is fresher and homelier, and the people also, despite all their misfortunes, are opener, happier and friendlier.

## GRAN TURISMO.

They are bigger, both in body and soul. The Italian dominance in Austria is certainly one of the most unnatural features in the present European polity, and the extreme unpopularity of the Italians, which is not allowed to show in the Press, is enough in itself to explain sympathy for the Nazis.

The sufferings and indignities of the Tyrolese at the hands of the Italians are well known to the world. Many of them were sent to fight Mussolini's battles in Abyssinia. In these hundred years since Metternich and Radetzky the wheel has indeed come full cycle. The Austrian people remember the Tyrol and cannot respect a Government which rests on Italian bayonets. What popular support this Government has comes from the Church, and I doubt whether the Church will gain in the end from the alliance, even with the aid of its martyr Dolfuss, whose shrines—it is hardly too much to call them that—are in most of the churches and are not unattended by worshippers. Dolfussplatz is as common in Austria as Adolf Hitlerstrasse in Germany. Austria is, I suppose, in accordance with its long traditions, still the most clerical country in Europe with the possible exception of Ireland. Even after the fall of the Hapsburgs, the Church still has power and wealth. The most able and long-lived Chancellor in the Republic was a priest, and bishops and abbots are still among the greatest powers in the land. Some of the most imposing or most beautiful buildings in the country are the great eighteenth-century abbeys like Melk, Klosterneuberg, Gottweig or Altenburg. When I visited Altenburg, it was evident that the troubles of Austria had not seriously touched this exquisite oasis. On a hot June afternoon I approached it from the Danube along execrable roads and through some poverty-stricken villages, but the Abbey lies like some sleeping beauty behind a thick belt of forest and is secure in the possession of this and other wide lands beyond. Except that the home farm was busy and workmen were repairing the roofs, there was everywhere an admirable peace. The church and all the domestic buildings were freshly cleaned and painted. The library, which is the loveliest pearl of the rococo style, contains a six-foot unicorn's horn which, I was told, was found in the forest near. In this fairy atmosphere I could almost believe it. There was a room over the entrance gate which was gaily painted and furnished like a French salon. This is used for what is called the Wedding Festival of the young monks. When they take their vows they invite to the Feast the bride whom they have deserted



or renounced and then take leave of her for ever. What a scene for tears and tragedy in the manner of de Musset or Gottfried Keller! Beyond this room, to revert to my simile of the sleeping beauty, the Abbot was asleep in his parlour, but when I visited Melk, which rises proudly above the Danube in a worldlier position, the Abbot was away in Vienna on affairs of State. The most popular place of pilgrimage in Austria is Mariazell. Like Lisieux, Loreto, or, I imagine, Lourdes, it abounds in all the horrors of such spots where nothing venerable or beautiful, nothing but the devotion or credulity of the faithful, commends them. Externally they have the atmosphere of Cheddar or Weston-super-Mare, and the *objets de piété* with which the stalls outside the churches are hung are æsthetically no better than the souvenirs from those places. Moreover, the means of transport to them are now the same and, as of old, they attract wealth. The treasury at Mariazell sparkles with gold and jewelled thankofferings: not only crosses and relics but watches, necklaces and tiaras, which must be of enormous value. Even the Porziuncula at Assisi has recently been further vulgarised from the same source by the addition of a vast, pompous and ill-fitting façade.

I was in Budapest on the feast of Corpus Christi. The Hungarians are predominantly a Catholic people, though both among the Magyars and their former subject peoples the Slovaks there are some curious outliers of Protestantism. The farthest, I suppose, to the East if the German Colonies in Russia be excepted. Debreczen, a severe little town in the middle of the Puzta, the plain of East Hungary, is known as the Protestant Rome. The Magyars give every sign of taking their religion, like everything else, seriously, and on Sunday the churches are crowded by men even more than by women. On Corpus Christi the Host is carried from S. Stephen's through the streets of Buda attended by the chief officers of State, who for their gorgeous and barbaric costume I assumed to be of the famous Magnates. Soldiers in steel helmets present arms and a military band plays as the Sacrament leaves the church. On the Sunday within the Octave we were at Eger, a little town at the foot of the few hills left to Hungary. It possesses a large classical cathedral and relics of a fortress with heroic memories of defence against the Turks long after the rest of the country had been subdued. Here too there was a procession through the streets, with halts at several altars erected at the doors of the houses and decorated with green boughs. There was a

solemn dignity about these functions as there is in this people altogether which induces at once a real sympathy and respect. I hold no brief for the old monarchy, for I consider that its policy and its continued existence was more than any other single cause responsible for the last war; but its two ruling races are to me the most likeable peoples on the Continent. They are both of them most friendly to Englishmen, and, for all I know, to all foreigners: the Austrians effusively, the Magyars naturally and courteously.

From Northern Hungary we crossed Slovakia into Poland. At this point, in the very beautiful region of the Tatra mountains, this strangely shaped new State is less than sixty miles in width and can be traversed in a long afternoon. 'Very difficult frontiers to defend,' I said to my hotel proprietor—'sie sind überhaupt nicht zu verteidigen'—they simply cannot be defended—he answered, with a satisfaction that openly revealed his Hungarian sympathies. I had long wished to see the churches of Krakow and the burial-places of the Polish Kings, and to set foot at least on the threshold of Eastern Europe. This is an ambition which for the motorist can only be realised with discomfort, expense and anxiety, and perhaps for that reason I formed no flattering opinion of the Polish people, and the more so inasmuch as in the country districts one's only communication can be with the Jews, who alone keep the shops (it reminded me of the Indian shopkeepers in East Africa) and alone speak German. Who in the world without perverted tastes, boundless leisure or some peculiar commercial incentive would learn Polish, or for that matter Magyar, Czech or Slovak? One result of the disappearance of the old monarchy is the decline of German, the 'lingua franca' of the middle classes. It was no uncommon experience to find the father or the grandfather brought out from the back of the shop to speak to one. The younger generation can only speak the native language, and this linguistic isolation is a curious and unsatisfactory result of the growth of democracy in these parts. The Jews, even more than the roads, are the reminder that when one crosses the Polish frontier, one has one foot in the East; the Roman Church keeps one's other foot in the West. Even the young Jews, both in Krakow and in the country, wear the black caftan, black cap, long black beards and ringlets at the forehead. I understand that Poland has no sumptuary law which compels this custom, but I can imagine none so provocative of the pogrom. The percentage

of Jews in Poland is over 10 per cent.; in Germany, according to Nazi statistics, only between 1-2 per cent.

At Krakow, in order to see the tombs of the kings which are, after Westminster Abbey, the finest series in Europe, I had also to see the corpse of Pilsudski lying-in-state some months after his death under glass in the crypt of the cathedral on the Wawel. This was the most treacherous as well as the coarsest and the most arbitrary of the Dictators. On attaining power he threw his former Socialist friends into prison, and later deserted his allies the French, to whom he owed everything, in order to compound with Hitler. Time will show the wisdom or otherwise of this policy. While he lived he did what he liked with Poland, and now pilgrimages are organised from all over the enormous land to the national shrine, where this professed Marxian Socialist rests in company with Ladislas Jagellon, Jan Sobieski, the saviour of Christendom, and the other Catholic kings.

I was in Krakow on the last day of the Octave of Corpus Christi. The Church is powerful enough to forbid any work to be done on that day, to the professed and, I think, sincere indignation of the mechanics who were mending, or, as I found out later, further rending my car. They complained that these religious or political holidays were much too numerous. In the evening enormous crowds filled the streets chanting and following the Host with evident devotion and pausing again, as we had seen in Hungary, at several house-door altars. As they came into the great central square of the town, with the tall Gothic church in the middle, another and more ragged procession was entering from the other end. This was the *lajkonik* or hobby-horse man who provides light relief on this occasion. He came prancing along in a mock old-style Jewish costume, the mob teasing and jeering at him, and anyone whom he hit with his jester's ball had to contribute a coin to his box. I could not discover whether he is in reality a Jew, but the office is hereditary in a family of the name of Myciuski. In Rome for two hundred years the Jews had once a year to run races through the streets for the edifying of the faithful. Another scene at this festival I shall not easily forget. In a baroque church near the university and the statue of Copernicus little girls were preceding the Sacrament as it was carried round the nave, dancing and scattering the petals of flowers before it. This is my most attractive memory of Poland.

Slovakia, for I now return there, is a country of peasants who

still, and not on Sundays only, wear their rich and coloured national dress. Among the long yellow stretches of mustard fields, which look like a coloured quilt stretched out before the mountains behind, one sees many bright red patches where the women are at work. We saw them too in Prague striding lustily in unending files down the chief street waving banners and shouting cheerfully 'long live the Catholic Church,' at least they all said 'katolicky,' and I presume the rest meant that. We had arrived at the time of a National Catholic Congress. An altar, in very modern style as befits Prague, at the head of the widest street, an open-air Mass with loudspeakers and massed choirs in the enormous stadium, and the old state coaches of the Hapsburgs brought out, to the admiration and amusement of the crowd, from the museum to carry the Cardinal Legate (the Archbishop of Paris), and the Archbishops of Vienna and Olmütz. Our hotel porter said we should have been more impressed by the Sokol's performance on this same spot a year or two before, but I doubt it. In the stadium the Papal Indulgence was pronounced in the six languages of the country, Czech, Slovak, German, Polish, Magyar and Ruthene, for this state is a League of Nations in itself, and its religious history and present composition are among the most complicated and interesting in Europe; the Czechs were Protestant one hundred years before the Reformation and completely Catholic one hundred years after it, as a result of a successful persecution. The State contains to-day the interesting historical survivals of the Moravian, the Utraquist and the Uniate communities, and experienced soon after the War a strong but unsuccessful anti-Papal movement among its Catholic clergy, including the claim to be allowed matrimony. In the Tatra Region several of these influences, religious and political, seem to converge—most of the shopkeeping class speak three languages of entirely different roots, Magyar, Slovak and German, and now feel some grievance at having to learn Czech as well.

If Roman Catholicism is as strong as ever on its eastern fringes, and even hopes in the weakness of the Orthodox Church to extend its sway into Russia, it is in Germany that at the present day its action is most interesting and most fateful. It is Germany which alone matters in this, as in everything. More than a third of Germany is Catholic. The Church is strong and alive. It was the only force which defeated Bismarck, and its political organ, the Centre Party, held the balance of power throughout the Re-

publican era. The Nazis dissolved the Centre Party, but they have gone further, for their doctrines are an open challenge not merely to the political but also to the spiritual life of Catholics with which the philosophy which they preach or patronise is completely incompatible. When even the Lutheran Christians, whose whole history and tradition is one of political subservience, rebel and prepare to suffer persecution, how much stronger and more determined must be the resistance of the proud and disciplined forces of Rome. Religious struggles develop slowly, but it seems that only a foreign war can avert a second *Kulturkampf* within the next few years. So far the clergy are the only Germans who have dared openly to criticise the Nazi régime, and the most damning denunciation of it which I know is contained in the Lenten sermons of Cardinal Faulhaber, Archbishop of Munich. Since these were delivered in 1934 the situation has not altered for the better. Some signs of the coming storm I heard on the day after I crossed the Bavarian frontier. A priest was preaching on the martyrdom of S. Ignatius, and the sternness of his manner and the openness of his allusions left no doubt as to his meaning. Meanwhile the old peasant devotions and cult continue. I went on a sunny day in July to see the lovely rococo church of Vierzehnheiligen. When the hay harvest is over the peasants from far and near come on pilgrimage here to the shrine of the Fourteen Helpers. The church is crowded. At intervals little groups led by priests with asperges and attendants with censers came down the western steps, wandered a short way through the fields and returned. Those who were not at their devotions were playing with children, eating, drinking beer at the foot of the great flight of steps below the façade. It was a scene for Breughel. No one should condemn the rococo style until he has seen the interior of Vierzehnheiligen and the library of Altenburg when their gay colours are flooded in the summer sun. From the gallery above it the shrine of the Fourteen Helpers with its canopy looks like nothing so much as a fairy coach standing ready to carry all its worshippers away into paradise. When the Mass was over a priest explained the building to the pilgrims. He pointed to the clear bright tints of the fantastically twisting walls and the frescoed ceilings, and said how these all represented the happiness of paradise, which in fact would be like this. In the inn outside a man told me how in the days before 'buses and cheap excursions his mother and many like her would get up before sunrise and walk from twenty miles away for this

pilgrimage and then back again, dead with exhaustion, all through the next night. Their faith gave them the strength, but it was much easier for them now.

One other picture, from France. On a dusty road in Lorraine at the foot of a little hill by a stream, I came suddenly upon a band of fifteen or twenty women marching along with banners and hymns, very hot, and with large bundles on their backs. In a moment I had passed them out of sight round the corner. This was a last sudden glimpse of those popular movements which, unsought, I had found over so wide an area, which were all inspired by the continued devotion of men to the oldest power of our civilisation, the Catholic Church. In the present state of Europe when the new barbarism led by the national dictators menaces all our culture and security, a menace beside which that of communism is insignificant, I think it a great mistake either to underrate or to fear the influence of this great international force whose interests in so many ways are those of all civilised men. We may deplore or deride the fact that the Pope has not openly supported the cause of the League against his own country and is as powerless as ever to stop wars between nations, even between Catholic nations. We may hope for a Papacy where the Italian element is at last reduced to a proper proportion and for a Pope who will fill a more heroic conception of the rôle of the Vicar of Christ. Perhaps one day these hopes may be realised, but, however that may be, this fact remains: the Church is still a power which commands the allegiance of millions; moreover, when it is attacked it knows how to defend itself, and is in the end not often beaten. It is at its strongest in defensive warfare, and the totalitarian state which claims the unique devotion of its subjects, allowing no real place for Church, family or individual conscience, must eventually bring its challenge to the issue of war, particularly in Germany. With a welcome directness, impossible to any European statesman, President Roosevelt has lately denounced the dictators and all that they imply as the principal cause of the world's uneasiness. So long as these idols are set up on high, there can be no security for liberty, for justice or for peace. In their downfall the League of Nations, the British Empire, the Catholic Church and many other forces as well, have a common interest, and for this reason should develop an increasing mutual sympathy.

## HEDGEHOG HARVEST.

BY PHYLLIS KELWAY.

THE old fable that a hedgehog stole apples by climbing a tree, falling upon the ripe fruit beneath, and walking off proudly with a number of apples spiked upon her back, has not yet worn thin in certain districts. In the West Country, where the zider apple grows, Hedgehog apparently still conducts moonlight robberies in the orchards. I expect a Somerset 'furze-pig' has a reputation for her professional knowledge of wealthy Blenheims, yellow-chequered Russets and rosy Cox's Orange Pippins. Many a time I have seen her nose-diving beneath a magnificent apple that lay partially covered by the lush green grass of a moist orchard. Caught thus, her actions look suspicious, but foolish is he who imagines for one moment that Hedgehog is contemplating apple tart. Fallen fruit is often scarred by wasps, and in these wounds small slugs find an appetising meal until a hedgehog discovers that apple-crammed slugs are excellent eating. This supposed longing for a vegetarian diet is quite easy to understand, for hedgehogs love a damp orchard, knowing well from instinct, arising from hunger, that most of the fatter creepy-crawlies prefer a mackintosh to a sunshade.

Assertions are made and repeated about Hedgehog which very much upset my own conceptions of her behaviour. Nevertheless, I would not dare to contradict. I have vainly appealed without the slightest sign of obedience to numbers of hedgehogs to eat one mouthful of fruit—pear, apple, melon, plum. If some day *one* hedgehog swallowed a pip I should certainly be surprised, but my amazement would not be of the knock-me-down-with-a-feather variety. With live creatures anything is within the bounds of possibility. Europeans do not dine off human flesh, yet there are such beings as cannibals. Hedgehogs have been seen with their heads fixed in old fruit tins left by picnickers, but the spinoza must necessarily be curious in her maraudings—even among the disgraceful leavings of untidy trippers—and this proves nothing. Likewise, my scores of insectivorous hedgehogs do not prove that an occasional individual with advanced ideas does not appear in a

generation. The great Fabre says that the hedgehog sometimes eats rotten fruit. . . . Oh, absent-minded Hedgehog!

Some time ago I wrote an article on hedgehogs which was found to be too short at the last moment before going to press. To lengthen it, a paragraph was written up in the magazine's office, the gist of which, taken from a good dictionary, unfortunately stated that part of the hedgehog's food consisted of freshly dug roots. People quite often ask me if it is right to feed their hedgehogs on swedes, apples and hay, and I sincerely hope that the paragraph did not send forth such folk to dig up new potatoes, turnips or carrots; if so, it was a death-blow to many a pet hedgehog.

Not long ago I read that a hedgehog had been seen eating mushrooms. I think it likely that here again she was searching for insects which cling to the eaves of a mushroom roof. If she were a youthful hedgehog, perhaps she had seen the Caterpillar smoking his hookah upon the milk-white table-top of his favourite toadstool, but she should have left him to his quiet meditation and smoke clouds, and refrained from upsetting the seat of an historic gentleman.

Men giving their last penny to a dog will cruelly slay a hedgehog suspected of tasting a mushroom. Somehow, I feel that Hedgehog is not the sort of creature to get her sense of values mixed. She is of the Insectivora. Members of this grand Order may enjoy great variety of food, not necessarily insects, but I have yet to find a hedgehog who would sit down to a vegetarian supper with a good grace.

One evening last summer two of my hedgehogs were scrounging among the delphiniums in a herbaceous border. They were never quiet on slug expeditions; every find was signalled by a volley of grunts. 'Grunt' is an expressive word, a word walking in sweet company with the pig. You know well of the naughty ragged things that creep into a human grunt: disgust, annoyance, irritation, disagreement, feelings that must not be shown in polite society. Whether hedgehogs talk to one another or not I cannot say, but actual speech would seem totally unnecessary when they have this medium of conversation. A grunt is often a happy sound signifying complete satisfaction with the world and its ways. When you become intimate with animals you learn that here is a language understood by all, a kind of Esperanto which suffices for ordinary social meetings, although it is always somewhat one-sided. To talk with any wild creature is a privilege, and after all, a one-sided conversation is by no means uncommon in our own drawing-rooms.



I am content to listen to Hedgehog's homely remarks in silence ; she, without doubt, prefers it that way, and as her topics and methods of expressing them are infinitely more in touch with nature than mine could ever hope to be, it is a mutually satisfactory arrangement.

When the grunts of the hedgehogs have gone through the delphiniums, through the stocky *Campanula glomerata*, and beyond to the forefront where the gentian-blue phacelia is striving to hold its own against overwhelming odds, I know that the garden will be a freer place before half an hour has passed. For at the end of June the delphiniums are well away beyond the power of slugs, and the purple *glomerata* is too old-fashioned to spend the night with dusky-coated gentlemen, but phacelia——! Admittedly, phacelia is rather crotchety from birth, liking neither the heat of the greenhouse nor the dampness of the ground outside, and when you hope that it really has pulled itself together, then the slugs step in and carry all before them. So the empty inverted rinds of grape-fruits have set up their yellow tents in the borders in order to entice the slugs within. My hedgehogs soon discovered that the delphiniums yielded little prey, while grape-fruit never failed to produce something exciting.

Our garden is honoured by several species of slug, some of them extraordinarily beautiful in suitable surroundings—if such could be found for as lowly a creature as the slug, and others with more character than loveliness. Of the latter, that slithery object, the Field Slug (*Limax agrestis*), causes tremendous havoc among young seedlings. If you try to pick him from the marigolds he rolls helplessly to the ground, and disappears miraculously among the leaves, or if you manage to push him on to a trowel, he contrives somehow to roll off. A hopeless individual, small of his kind, and like many an apparently harmless one, extremely irritating. The hedgehogs agreed with me heartily on the subject, for as soon as they seized a Field Slug, they discovered a milky substance covering their black noses which upset their equilibrium for some minutes. Nevertheless, the taste was evidently enjoyable ; all hedgehogs quite like Field Slug on the menu if they are not required to eat too many at one sitting.

Another slug retiring to the grape-fruit for the daytime is that small dark creature with an orange 'foot,' the Garden Slug (*Orion hortensis*). Beyond the ordinary sluggy stickiness, this tough-skinned customer is an easy victim, and hedgehogs devour him with relish. The bulk of food that a hedgehog requires before her hunger

is appeased is surprising, and from the point of view of the gardener wholly excellent.

Three other slugs slink from doubtful seats in the unmortared stone of a wall. Each is different, very large, and distinctly opulent in appearance. The Black Slug, looking most distinguished in immaculate evening dress, minus the boiled shirt, parades the orchard among the fallen fruit, but is not amiss to suspicious nightly adventures in the garden. Hedgehogs will eat him when nothing else offers, pawing him angrily and half-burying him in the soil, and finally, after a great to-do, coming to grips with his bulky form. Next we have the Brown Slug dressed in a golden-yellow suit, who eats Shirley poppies with great rapidity and the flowers of Iris. We have also a wonderful sleek individual in grey marked with dark streaks, who seems to prefer the neighbourhood of water. Our gardens often groan under the tyranny of the last three monsters, usually less in number than the smaller species, but more conspicuous. Death comes to them when young or leaves them to a ripe old age, and I think that hedgehogs will often pass by the old stagers if other food is available. Gamekeepers may wag their heads over stolen pheasants' eggs, but while Hedgehog fills her tummy with the small swarthy marauders that practise the art of camouflage so cleverly on the dark soil, then we gardeners have no quarrel with her. Slugs may come and slugs may go, but despite our excursions to squash and kill when the sun is set, slugs go on for ever. If Hedgehog can diminish the numbers of the pests, then good luck to her! Only I wish she would extend her activities to roses, and begin her dinner with Greenfly *hors d'œuvres*.

At night, hundreds of harmful grubs and insects appear from nowhere to feast in lowly company upon our most high and mighty. In daylight we do not see the creatures unless we are unusually curious and energetic with spade and trowel, but Hedgehog knows all about them long before she is born. They mean to her the difference between a life of contentment and a life of irritation and poverty.

We tire of insecticides, of the evil Paris Green, of hand-picking creepy-crawlies, of drowning things in salt and water, and snipping them horribly with garden scissors. The whole business is revolting but inevitable. Yet hedgehogs, most exacting of hunters, most capable slugicides, grubicides and beetle-ines, still hang upon gibbets in gruesome company to haunt the woodland as terrifying examples of what an animal may not do. Gamekeeper and gardener. . . .

Sad it is that gardeners too have their own burial grounds—not a gibbet above royal-headed pæonies, but earth to earth, ashes to ashes. . . .

What harm can a hedgehog do in a garden? What crimes may she commit among our precious lilies that have taken so many years to get established? Disaster may befall the white Madonnas and seedlings, but Hedgehog is not the culprit.

As a guest of the garden I cannot think of any serious charge against the little spinoza unless it be her occasional taste for eggs. Should she come by chance upon a pipit's nest, or that of a skylark or robin, laying on or near the ground, then she may be tempted, and if tempted will surely fall. The temptation probably does not rest in the fact that eggs are before her, easy to snatch and gobble at a mouthful, rich and yolky and yellow, but in an unprofitable evening—and therefore in her hunger. I cannot believe that Hedgehog is as devoted to omelette as we are frequently told. That she is found sometimes at a ravaged clutch of pheasants' or partridges' eggs is indisputable, but I have left six freshly laid sparrows' eggs in a summer-house for a week with five hedgehogs as occupants, and the shells were unbroken at the end of that period, but on the other hand some hedgehogs have quickly cracked the grey-blotched shells. Apparently, Hedgehog cannot break a hen's egg with her teeth, and although she will sniff at it with some show of interest, I have never known her succeed. On several occasions I have opened an egg in the approved kitchen manner by tapping the shell on the edge of a bowl and emptying yolk and all into the hedgehog's dish of bread-and-milk. The egg on so many mornings was the only food remaining that after a while the tuppences went toward something better appreciated.

If Hedgehog could only climb trees and eat the eggs of jays, hawks and owls, she would soon wear a halo in the eyes of those who preserve game, but her nose being closer to nests of favoured birds, she is dubbed 'thief,' and therefore has no option but to 'go post-haste to the devil with the greater number.' To take for yourself what others require is a crime; to take what others do not need is a fair deal. The world is old. Hedgehog tasted eggs with a free conscience long before certain birds were preserved for sport, and I hope that if ever I have the good fortune to own a few broad acres of earth, she may indulge in an occasional egg for breakfast with an easy mind and without fear of calamity. Yet who knows? They say that if you give a Socialist property he becomes a bloated

capitalist ; a tyrant even toward his undermost underlings. And Hedgehog, bless her, is an honest underling of the undergrowth.

Gentleness is not one of the hedgehog's virtues. In daylight she may be docile as she lies curled in a tight ball, but see her at night and you know her as a veritable tiger. A hunter must necessarily attack if he is to return with a bag that is not empty. Hedgehog therefore finds herself in a painful situation. It has been said of her, not once, but many times, that she will seize and devour any creature she is strong enough to overcome. In a sense this is true, but with the exaggeration so readily applied to animal literature in order to make it readable, the fact has been distorted into an untruth that gathers more moss every time it is set rolling. We hear now of hedgehogs climbing hen roosts and eating Rhode Island Reds ! Perhaps we have here as good a story as that of the hedgehogs of olden days who milked cows, a tale occasionally related even now. The average weight of an adult hedgehog is about one and a half pounds. Full-grown fowls of various breeds weigh anything from three and a half to seven or eight pounds. Quite apart from difference in bulk, and even if you allow that a hedgehog could clamber safely to a perch (she has absolutely no sense of balance), how will she do the doughty deed ? Her sooty paws are useless for killing anything other than slugs and small fry. Her pointed teeth are certainly very sharp, and she can employ a splendid bulldog grip on small creatures. But a Rhode Island Red or any self-respecting fowl would either squawk or flutter a wing. Either of these actions is sufficient to terrify poor Hedgehog out of her seven wits. Yet we hear of folk who actually believe that a hedgehog has cleared a hen roost !

The same people fancy that hedgehogs capture and kill rabbits, pheasants and partridges. To this I would say that Hedgehog is a firm believer in a severe Speed Limit. Brer Rabbit, obviously a law unto himself, puts on a spurt whenever he pleases ; the pheasant, with true racing spirit, starts up in his sports car with terrific explosions, and the partridge follows suit in milder fashion. Prickles, rightly named hedge-hog, is never under any circumstances a road-hog ; when charged, her defence must be that she suffers for the misdemeanours of others.

Should an animal or bird lie mortally wounded or disabled, or be in such state that it could not be stimulated to violent action by the nip of Hedgehog's teeth, then the Prickly One will assuredly eat her fill, no matter how large the creature happened to be. She

would dine off cow, giraffe or elephant if she could perform the impossible feat of biting an opening in the hide. I feed all my hedgehogs liberally on red meat bought from the butcher. No doubt they would enjoy their meal no less if the whole beast—legs, shoulder, heart, lungs, liver and scrag-end-of-neck was put before them, instead of four ounces upon a lordly dish. But when I find Hedgehog gorging herself on dead cow under a moonless sky, I shall not run home crying that a hedgehog has killed one of Farmer Mangelwurzel's cattle, despite the fact that nine people out of ten might believe me.

Food for most animals is a forethought and an afterthought, but for us to add to their burden of finding, keeping, and eating, is not always fair play. Every day we snuff out little lives to protect our own property or interests, and when the decision lies between no slugs *or* no Brompton Stocks, no greenfly *or* no roses, no mice *or* no peas, then perhaps we cannot be blamed if we set forth with slugicides, strong-smelling solutions and break-back traps. Last night I hand-picked one hundred and twenty slugs, but I am not ashamed of the slaughter, for I do love blue cynoglossum, and there is not a shadow of doubt that slugs share my affection.

On dry gorse-covered heaths Hedgehog will not hesitate to snap up a lizard if she can come to grips with his lithe form, but I doubt if she is often successful. To see her jogging after the agile mercurial lizard is somewhat like watching a hippopotamus groping for an annoying mouse nibbling his tail. This summer, dozens of the nimble long-toed reptiles have eluded my grasp just as I would have pounced after a careful approach. Lizards have exceedingly quick eyes, which are not lidless like the eyes of our snakes. During the last two summers they must have had a great time, baked by a sun beyond their ken in an English climate. While watching their neat brown bodies prick forward in clockwork jerks up the seedling oaks and beeches, I have wondered if they too have been well 'ripened' in company with our bearded irises and flowering shrubs. At night the common lizard snoozes in a bed of leaves with eyes closed. His bedroom is difficult to discover, but Hedgehog's findings are often a little 'chancey,' and should she thrust that vigorous snout of hers under his pillow, or perchance poke through the other end of the sheets and tickle his slender toes, then Lizard would assuredly have the worst nightmare of his life without living to see if it were true or merely a dream. In winter he darts with jerky energy no longer, but lies comatose beneath the heather roots,

an easy prey in spite of his coat of light mail, with orange belly turned downward to the sod. Over him blows the autumn blast and the last wayward leaves ; upon him falls the sky in winter torrent and fleecy snow, but at this time Hedgehog too is slumbering in that deep state from which we may not call her. Sleep, Lizard and Hedgehog ; sleep side by side if you will, while the valves of winter open to drench the naked arms of the trees, the broad shoulders of the moor, and the open-handed palms of the fields you have loved.

Hedgehog, in the eyes of too many, will never be anything but a robber of poultry pens, a milker of cows, a burglar of apples, a wanton woman ! On many occasions the dear old dame has made her mistakes in a civilised world—errors for which she has paid with her life-blood. Some people believe in absolute right and absolute wrong ; maybe here are they who claim for the hedgehog physical impossibilities. The hedgehog will eat small creatures such as frogs, mice and young rats when she can capture them and if they are not strong enough to cause an uproar. When she comes to grips she literally tears her prey to bits. I once lifted a tame hedgehog who had her teeth fast in a mouse, high above my head, and when I lowered her to the ground again she continued her meal quite undisturbed. In wandering through the fields in summer she must eat a vast number of litters of voles, and nestlings of ground birds too, but I think her captures of adult birds—even of such small-bodied customers as pipits, wagtails or larks—are exceedingly few. For the good of her character how splendid it would be if it could be proved that she ate fully-grown mice and rats, but unfortunately evidence seems to point the other way.

Most small animals move in panic-stricken jerks when touched unexpectedly, and unless Hedgehog can seize her prey at one bite, any wild thing in good health and with a full grasp of its faculties would be off and away long before the sniffing, very noisy hedgehog had come within a yard. I have caught dozens of mice myself at one time and another by stalking them quietly and with infinite patience, for all mice have extremely short sight and trust their ears to warn them of danger. The task, even for a mere human, requires all the skill of a careful stalker, and *silence*. A blown leaf or the rasping whisper of dry grass will send any mouse scuttling for cover before you can say ' Jack Robinson.' At night all sounds are hushed ; the leaf that smacked the stem unheard in the chorus of daily happenings gathers sound when activities cease. Hedge-

hog, dear old lady, has never learnt the art of walking softly. Her black paws have to carry a heavy body, and as she never has the slightest intention of stalking in the manner of weasel and stoat, she waddles along in bedroom slippers, trailing her hairy skirts through the grasses, moving in a luxury of sniffs and grunts that would make a stoat's hair stand on end. Neither slug nor snail can say he is 'not at home' when he hears Hedgehog ringing his front-door bell, but the more fleet-footed people of hedgerow and field are here to-day and gone to-morrow. Hedgehog cannot cope with their activities, so like the wise old lady she is, she never hankers after the unobtainable, but gives thanks for what is before her nose. In my experience some hedgehogs will not even bite through the skin of a mouse. I have given many a house mouse, warm from the trap, and found it later slightly mauled by the hedgehogs but uneaten. When I cut a hole in the stomach, most of the mouse disappears by morning. Likewise, several fledgling birds, fallen into the hedgehogs' house by mistake, have not had so much as a feather plucked from their scraggy backs.

To show my absolute faith in the hedgehog's disinclination to attack any creature that has the strength to struggle violently, I kept a youthful sparrow in the same summer-house occupied by a family of five. When the sparrow was first introduced to the hedgehog dormitory he could flutter over the ground but was unable to fly. At night he slept in a box lined with hay; this was his dangerous time, for while he slumbered the family came forth on nocturnal maraudings. The sparrow, named Pete, was full of energy and joy of living. Had it not been that I was fully convinced that the hedgehogs would leave him unmolested after investigation, I should have provided him with more private sleeping-quarters. The hedgehogs were sufficiently curious to knock the roof off Pete's home on several consecutive nights, but each morning Master Sparrow greeted me vociferously when I called upon him, yauping loudly for his breakfast. When he had grown to days of discretion and could fly short distances, he decided that a box was too babyish for a manly sparrow. So he left his cot on his own initiative, and booked a bed each night at the back of the tea-chest in which the hedgehogs slept. Now, this decision on his part, though admirably courageous, seemed a little risky. After all, he had not a jungle of grass in which to escape if the hedgehogs made things warm for him, although the summer-house was of fair size.

Perhaps the family had some code of their own which forbade

them to injure a guest. Perhaps they waited for the goose to be well fattened before they killed it. Whatever the reason, Pete grew to be a handsome young fellow, roosting upon the edge of the tea-chest during the last weeks of his sojourn within four walls. During the period the hedgehogs certainly had ample food. They were never desperately hungry, but apart from their normal ration of bread-and-milk they only received meat twice a week. They never had more food than they could clear in a night. A wild hedgehog is not short of food in the summer months, so it may be that a close comparison in the state of the tummies of free and confined would not be unjustifiable.

Had Pete been unable to flutter with his sparrow-like energy the hedgehogs would have made mincemeat of him in no time, but to a hedgehoggy intellect it is most disconcerting to feel an ugly baby bird pirouetting around when you are just about to break your fast.

Long hours I have sat in the dark with only a torch staring uncertainly downward from a nail on the wall, and as I watched have been amazed at a hedgehog's timidity in life as compared with her ferocious desires on paper. If any small prey 'makes a scene' then the life of that potential victim is spared, for Hedgehog immediately stubs her nose on the ground or rolls into a ball. Her whole prickly attitude declares: 'Another of my mistakes; whew, that was a near thing!' Yet I would not keep a ravenous hedgehog in a coop with baby chickens if I must pay £1 a head for any casualties! Pete the Sparrow lived safely for three months with not one but five hedgehogs, and when he was admitted to the freedom of the garden, he had the audacity and friendliness to creep back through a hole in the wire window to roost on his favourite perch above the tea-chest. Was this mere bravado? I think not. Pete was one of many who, like himself, can and do live within arm's length of a hedgehog's mighty jaws, and watch weekly a hedgehog's harvest.

You Rhode Island Reds, with your pedigrees, egg records, champion cocks, show pens and county trials, will you be beaten by a devil-may-care *sparrow*? Oh, cover your combs in shame!

For generations Hedgehog has suffered at the hands of Man, but surely the education of the twentieth century should relieve her at least from the penalties of ancient fables. Let her pay for *fact* if she must, but not in these days for fiction. On my table I have that green bible of all country-people, *The Countryman*. Always



plump with good fare, hearty and sturdy, it digs and delves in every corner of our country-side. Here are four of its findings gleaned from the churchwardens' accounts for the parish of Buckfastleigh, in South Devon, which Mr. Robertson Scott has kindly allowed me to quote :

' 1723 pd Richard Ellett for killing 6 hedgehoggs ..	00	02	00
1738 paid Henry Gazek for 2 ffuse pigs (editor adds : furze-pigs, hedge-hogs) . . . . .	00	00	08
1746 pd to Mary Crimp for drink for killing a hedhog . . . . .	00	00	04
1756 (editor adds : 49 hedgehogs were killed this year)'			

Then, jumping to the present, Sir Arthur Thomson, in *Nature by Night*, writes of 150 hedgehogs he found in North Wales on a single wire, from which the falling maggots were intended to feed the pheasants.

Past and present. Poor old Hedgehog !

### SHADOW AND SONG.

THE shadows steal upon the wood,  
A dark and silent corps—  
And plaintively the nightingale  
Her treasure doth outpour,  
A wealth of gold and silver notes,  
Of jewelled melodies,  
Echoing through a dream-held world  
Of shadows and tall trees.

Of all the world, the only things  
To listen to the tune  
Are the ghostly, silent shadows,  
The tall trees, and the moon.

IVY O. EASTWICK.

## THE D'ARBLAYS IN JULY, 1815.

BY A. J. WAUCHOPE.

AMONG some Burney relics in a box of old family papers are two letters dated July, 1815. They are only private letters, one between friends, and the other from a young man to his mother. But they were written in stirring times. For, on the 18th of June the brilliant career of Napoleon Bonaparte had been finally brought to an end by the Battle of Waterloo. The 'little Corsican' who tyrannised a Continent was beaten at last and banished to a lonely spot in mid-ocean. The Nations breathed again. A King crept back to his Throne.

It is all a matter of History now. Generations have come and gone. But the letters of people living at that time give a human touch to the bare facts of History ; and 'one touch of nature makes the whole World kin.' This is their apology for rising from a dusty old box and appearing before the public now.

*Letter I*, dated July the 4th, 1815, is from Mrs. Locke of Norbury Park to her young friend Alex d'Arblay. An undergraduate at Caius College, Cambridge, he was then spending part of the Long Vacation with his Aunt Broome and her family down at Richmond.

Twenty-two years earlier, when Fanny Burney was visiting the Lockes at Norbury, she was introduced to a party of penniless French aristocrats at Juniper Hall, exiled from their own land in the Reign of Terror. There Fanny met *Monsieur d'Arblay*, a book-lover (like herself), cultured, charming and modest. They fell in love at first sight ! He had no prospects, her father withheld consent ; but their union proved a perfectly happy one. They were married in Mickleham village church on a bright summer day, and they started their happy little *ménage* in a tiny cottage near the Park. Their only son, Alex, was born in December, 1794. Three years later, they moved to 'Camilla Cottage,' built and named after Fanny's third novel. In 1801 the short-lived peace with France tempted M. d'Arblay to revisit his native land. Old friends hailed his return and warmly welcomed his wife and boy. But alas ! the Republic had grabbed his estates, and the new Govern-

ment ignored all claims. True, Napoleon offered him a commission in the Army that would have meant a return to his former rank and title ; but this he firmly declined, refusing to take up arms against England. The Napoleonic wars of aggression were soon in full swing. No passports for England could be had. D'Arblay took a small post in the *Bureau de l'Intérieur* to support his wife and child. Thus Alex, from seven to seventeen, was educated in France. He became a good classical scholar, little short of a genius in mathematics, and absolutely devoted to his parents. In August, 1812, Madame d'Arblay took courage in both hands, gathered up books and manuscripts, and fled with her son to England, just in time to avoid his conscription for the disastrous Campaign in Russia. She sent Alex to Cambridge in 1813, produced her fourth novel, *The Wanderer*, and tended her father, Dr. Burney, till his death in April, 1814. That year, Paris fell to the Allies, Napoleon abdicated, and Louis XVIII reigned. D'Arblay, one of the first to offer service and allegiance to his King, was reinstated in the *Gardes du Corps du Roi*. Pluckily, his wife rejoined him, leaving Alex to the care of her English relations. Then came the 'Hundred Days,' which ended on the 18th of June in the great Battle of Waterloo. D'Arblay was on duty at Trèves ; his wife was at Brussels, where she heard the roar of battle, and saw with horror the dead and wounded brought into the town. On the 25th she wrote a long letter to Mrs. Locke (published in her *Diary and Letters*) ; and this kind maternal friend lost no time in passing on the good news of her safety to Alex.

## LETTER I.

Addressed :—To

Alex d'Arblay Esq.<sup>re</sup>  
at Mrs. Broome's  
Lower Road  
Richmond  
Surrey.

Norbury Park,  
Tuesday night,  
4 July, 1815.

MY DEAR ALEX.<sup>r</sup>

If you have not already received the certainty of your precious parents' safety you will love me dearly for this assurance which came to me this morning. I need not tell you how fervently I returned thanks for such a mercy.—The date of the Letter Sunday

25<sup>th</sup> June.—Your dear Father was at *Trèves* and has been ever since y<sup>e</sup> 23.<sup>rd</sup> of May. His mission is to receive and examine Deserters from Bonaparte—‘*Les Fidèles plus tôt au Roi*’—a business of infinite delicacy, so many ‘are the *Espions* who are ready to *glisser* themselves on this side to gather information under every possible form & pretence; there are nine other officers who have the same commission all upon frontier Towns. This station he has never quitted altho’ he has made various efforts to place himself more actively; but his mission has been successful, & I, you will believe, am well content it has not been changed.’—‘At Mons whither now all the Royal Family are going, Mons. d’Auvergne has just been sent on the same errand *pour remplacer* Mons. le Comte de la Poterie.’

Your dear Mother had begun and nearly finished a Letter to you when all her friends determined to set out for Antwerp, & she had prepared to follow them, & the Letter went into her little paquet of Cloaths. For she afterwards found that Brussels was perfectly safe, but her friends all left her excepting M.<sup>e</sup> de Maureville. But she laments that she hears no news & is in the dark concerning all interesting events. She seems in good health & spirits.

Your dear Father had ‘written & published a proclamation inviting his Countrymen to join him, which is to be thrown by every means into France, & which he has signed with his name.’

And now my dear Alex.<sup>r</sup> I must only bless you & hasten this away. Pray remember me most kindly to Mrs. Broome & communicate how well your precious Mother is.

I have the great pleasure of possessing Mrs. Burney.

Your Maternal,

FRE.<sup>a</sup> AUG.<sup>a</sup> LOCKE.

*Letter II*, dated July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1815, is from young Alex d’Arblay to his mother. A sheet of stout paper, foolscap size, covered with script on three sides and half-way down the fourth, was doubled and folded again, with ends turned in to leave a clear square for the address. Carefully marked, ‘single sheet’ and ‘*feuille simple*’ in the top corners of the square, it was addressed—‘à Madame—Madame d’Arblay—à Bruxelles.’ But the absent-minded Alex forgot to post it; and, finding it in his pocket a week later, he asked his Aunt Burney to send it off; which she did. It bears the official mark, ‘Paid. 1s. 4d.’ In due course the letter arrived at Brussels. But Madame was gone. She had left hurriedly on the 19<sup>th</sup> to join her husband who was ill at Trèves; and as soon as he could move they went to Paris. So the letter was re-directed ‘To

the Rt. Honble. Lady Alvanley—To the Care of Sir Andrew Barnard Commandant etc. etc. *à Paris*': for Paris was in the hands of the Allies, and the Prussians were apt to intercept all private letters. Opened by the Honourable Lady, sealed up again by the Commandant with a big 'B' in red wax and the remark, 'Missent to Lady Alvanley,' the precious letter reached Madame d'Arblay at last!

Alex always wrote to his parents with perfect candour, in the odd mixture of English and French natural to his birth and early education. The good news of 'Boney's Surrender' had rejoiced their hearts; the War was over, and 'Napoleon on board the *Bellerophon*,' a prisoner in the hands of the English, realised his own defeat as final. His pen portrait by Alex, based on the talk of the time, might well have inspired Orchardson's fine picture, painted sixty-five years later, now on exhibition in the Tate Gallery in London.

But General d'Arblay would repudiate utterly his son's crude satire on the ineptitude of the Bourbons. As a loyal Royalist he honoured the King and craved no honours in return. Of the noble family of Piochard d'Arblay (who held commissions from four Kings *Louis* in succession), a cultured aristocrat of the Old Régime, he never used his title of *Comte* except in the service of his King. Officer of the Guards under *Louis XVI*, Field-Marshal and Adjutant-General with Lafayette, he lost everything in the French Revolution, and came to England in 1792 a ruined exile. Yet he could laugh at his own plight and gaily trim the little garden hedge in Surrey with his sword! In France under the Empire he declined posts of distinction pressed upon him by his old friends Narbonne and Gassendi, and even by the Emperor himself. But when the Empire fell in 1814 and his King and Country called; d'Arblay at the age of sixty led the van among volunteers. He served *Louis XVIII* till Waterloo was won, then finally retired in shattered health, with the rank and half-pay of Lieutenant-General—the pay a mere pittance—but he knew the poverty of the Bourbon Treasury and made no complaint. In the autumn of 1815 General d'Arblay brought his wife home to England. They settled in quiet lodgings in Bath, and found great happiness in reunion with their son and with all the Burney tribe and connection. The General died at Bath in 1818.

A word more about Alex. Later on he followed his father's example in caring more for devotion to a high calling than promotion

to honour. Having gained his Degree and a Fellowship at Cambridge, he made his home with his widowed mother and devoted all his talent to the study of Theology. His late father's friend, the *Duc de Luxembourg*, offered him a commission with rank and title in the French Guards—a tempting offer; but Alex declined, and held to his purpose of preparing for Holy Orders. He was ordained in 1819, and served in the Ministry of the English Church until his death in 1837.

Here is the young man's letter to his mother:

LETTER II.

Turnham Green. July 27<sup>th</sup>, 1815.

Thursday Evening.

DEAREST MADRE

I came yesterday here, on a visit to dear Aunt Esther [Burney] for a week; and now, first of all, to essential business. Mrs. Locke has just written to my Aunt (and tho' I think it very unnecessary to trouble you about this, I must just mention it), that Mr. William Locke 'earnestly wished to pay into Martin [Burney]'s hands the price of the Cottage, etc. without waiting for M.H. completing the business, his Lawyer being ill, when to his great surprise, M. M. Burney explained that he was not empowered to receive the money, not having Mons.<sup>r</sup> d'Arblay's power of attorney.' I will walk tomorrow to town to see Martin upon this business, and try to get the money to be invested, without waiting another fortnight at least for your legal autorisation. And I shall not send off this letter without writing to you the result of our conversation;—this is all I can do;—it is a thousand pities that you did not leave a power of attorney behind you before you left England. However, we must trust that '*Ce qui est différé, n'est pas pour cela perdu.*'

Mrs. Locke 'shakes hands with me most cordially about the surrender of Boney;'—you will no doubt join in heart and soul. The thing is, now we have him, to keep him close at St. Helena or Dumbarton Castle on the Clyde,—*not* in England,—for the *tyrant* of the World should not be allowed to taint with his polluted breath the pure air of a *free* Country, or contaminate its soil with his unhallowed feet; especially as he has more friends and admirers in this Country than anywhere else, and that with his wonderful versatility of talent he might rouse a disturbance, or at least turn to his insidious ends the next riot about a *Corn Bill* or a *Princess of W . . . s*, or any such nonsense that the honest mob—John Bull—may chuse to *take up* and to *run down*. Nor is this merely a playful conjecture, for already the crew of the *Bellerophon* (Capt.

Maitland), on board of which he is now at Torbay, say that he is 'a devilish good fine fellow, and that they like him vastly.'—Nor does he spare any arts, any addresses, any flourishes, or addresses to their vanity, or appeals to their passions. When he arrived at Torbay, '*Enfin,*' said he, '*le voilà ! ce beau pays !—le noble sol de la Liberté ! La voilà ! cette Nation sans laquelle j'aurais été Empereur de l'Est et de l'Ouest. C'est elle qui, toujours florissante, quoiqu'assaillie de toutes parts, a sans cesse déjoué par sa persévérance les projets du Génie ;—elle que j'ai voulu anéantir ;—elle qui du premier trône du monde, m'a deux fois replongé dans la Nuit ;—elle enfin qui, toujours généreuse, offre seul un asyle à mon infortune. Eh quoi ? Vous vous étonnez ? Ne sais-je pas honorer mes ennemis ? C'est moi—c'est Napoléon qui loue aujourd'hui les Anglais ! Voyez les coups du sort !—Eh bien !*' (shrugging his shoulders), '*La prospérité m'avais trop enivré ;—elle est passée ;—tant mieux ;—l'adversité me rend à moi-même. Je fus souvent petit dans le succès ;—mais vous me verrez grand dans le revers. Je ne serai plus le Souverain du Continent ; je ne verrai plus les Nations enchainées à mon char ; je ne pourrai plus élever m'abattre des Trônes ;—mais n'importe ;—ce que j'ai fait, c'est fait ;—l'histoire le conservera ;—mon nom me reste.—Je suis BONAPARTE ! et c'est assez !*'—I do not say that these were his words, but that he spoke to that effect in that rapid, restless, incoherent, but energetically and strikingly characteristic style.

Another thing he said to Captain Maitland : '*La force a retabli les Bourbons,—deux fois ;—l'Étranger est dans la Capitale ;—l'esprit de la Nation et de l'Armée est comprimé ;—mais c'est un volcan qui à leur départ éclatera sur lui ;—le choc sera électrique ;—la France sait ses droits ;—et mon fils, le fils des Césars, regnera !—Ils sont huit, je crois, ces Bourbons,—sept hommes et une femme ;—morale-ment, sept femmes et un homme !*' (meaning that great man the Duchesse d'Angoulême !)

In this I am afraid there may be more truth than we are willing to admit. The King is in the hands of the Jacobins,—of his Brother's murderers,—of Buoney's friends,—of a set of ruffians,—Fouché at the head,—the crafty Talleyrand, &c. Is it likely that such men would call such loyal subjects as my Father round the throne ?—And what honour to him *if he was asked* to mix with such people ?—such company ? Why,—he would be quarrelling with them from morning to night, till they would contrive to get him underhand removed secretly, God knows where. What can we expect from a superannuated Monarch, *un Esclave couronné*, ruling a demoralized nation, with revolutionary Ministers ?—who, while they manage the State their own way (and just give him permission to sign his name when his hand is not too tottering even

for that), give him carefully and faithfully, I suppose, some such things as a pill in the morning, a bit of plum-pudding at noon, and a Clyster at night; while he, poor Soul!—

'In spight of their most solemn declarations,  
And of the plighted faith of Kings and Nations,  
On foreign arms borne from Batavia's plains,  
Lolls thoughtless on his gouty throne and *REIGNS*!!

'Reigns—as George Regent when he goes to dance;—  
Reigns—as the *fainéant* Kings of ancient France;—  
Reigns—as Will. Fred. of Prussia mourns his wife,  
In past regrets absorbing present life.—

'Heavens! how unlike his Martial Sire of old!—  
The brave, the gay, the amiable, the bold;—  
In battle louder than the Cannon roaring;—  
In peace more placid than the Shepherd snoring!—

'While poor Fred leaning on his restless pillow,  
Or on a lonely bank beside a willow,  
Thinks ceaseless weeping is no peccadillo.—  
While passengers viewing the stupid drill—"Oh!  
*Quantum*," they say, "*mutatis est ab illo*!"'

Which means, How different from his Sire!—Virgil,—as Pangloss would say.

Aunt Hetty desires me to return you her thanks for a charming letter, which she would have answered before now, had she not been afflicted with a lameness in her fingers which is come she knows not how; her hand is for the present useless to her. She is having medical advice, and I hope is getting better, but it will be a work of time; it occasions her many privations, and is at times very painful.

We are all equally anxious to hear of your Books and M.S.S., and greatly disappointed at my Father's not being rewarded as he ought. But I expected it all along. The Bourbons can neither discover hidden merit, nor have they spirit enough to foster it if they had the *nous* to *déterrer* it.

My Aunt has passed some pleasant days at Norbury, where she had the pleasure of being when arrived your letter to Mrs. Locke. Charles Parr [Burney]'s notice was too short for either Aunt Hetty or Uncle James to write in time, which fretted them both.

I am putting into French Verse at this moment Pope's Elegy to an Unfortunate Lady; I shall write out my attempt for you



at the first opportunity, tho' I believe it is more congenial to the Spirit of Latin than of French.

Since I wrote this, I have discovered that Martin has been on a tour to Margate. I therefore wrote to Mrs. Locke.

I have finished my translation, and will send it by my next letter. I laboured hard at it, and it came off much better than I could expect. Aunt Hetty and Mr. Burney were very much pleased with it.

I am very happy to see in today's papers an act of vigour unexpectedly committed by the King. But it would have been much better had the list of the proscribed appeared sooner; for now the most notorious have I fear escaped. I should likewise wish that *Fouché's* name might appear a little higher up in the list than it does. I have no patience with that Scoundrel,—*tour à tour* Minister of Buoney's and of Louis';—*tour à tour* betrayer of both; who, at the fall of the former, took the reins of Government, *provisoirement*, with *Carnot*,—a much better man than himself, because, tho' his principles were often erroneous, he has always acted *consistently*—(and I always feel some respect for a rogue who is uniformly faithful to the same *species* of roguery). And he deserves as much to be honoured for surlily refusing the portfolio of Minister of the Interior, as for his consummate Genius in the various characters of Statesman, Orator, Warrior and Mathematician.

Here the long letter from Alex d'Arblay to his mother comes abruptly to an end, without any signature. The big sheet of paper was almost covered with writing, but there was just room on the 'turn-down' to add this characteristic postscript:

*P.S.* By some mistake this letter, written a week ago, was not sent. I found it just now in my pocket. Aunt Hetty will forward it by the first opportunity.

# WILLOW PATTERN.

BY ALAN JENKINS.

## I.

### THE HUNTINGJOY.

WHEN the short spring twilight began to merge into the blackness of night, and the tawny owls of Dewgates Wood had been calling an hour, the bitch otter issued from the hover. Her round, fierce-whiskered face peered cautiously from the entrance in the willow roots. Once this willow had been sturdy and flourishing, then lightning had struck it and the top half trailed naked in the little river and was presently borne downstream. For a time the lower trunk still struggled feebly and instinctively towards the light, but water rotted the core of the tree, and now all that remained of life was a shockhead of long green-tipped slender shoots, of which there were fewer each succeeding year. The rest of the tree was a lichen-threaded shell of bark, dabbling cold dead feet in loamy soil and water.

The bitch paused, her slitted nostrils testing the damp air. Slim spiked rushes and juicy-stemmed kingcups, whose yellow petals were bursting the green calyxes, screened the entrance-hole under the crumbling bark. The hover itself lay farther in the bank, a space under the groping roots of the tree.

Presently, satisfied, the otter snaked out of the willow and dropt noiselessly on to a shelf of sand lying below the bank. Her black eyes caught the light and gleamed momentarily. Half-uncertain still, in the greytime, that period between day and night, she halted again. She stared across the water. She listened and sniffed again, questing the air anxiously. Every nerve in her long lithe body was tense. Behind her in the warm moss- and wool-lined nest her three fast-growing cubs lay, sleeping soundly until milkhunger should wake them and set them mewling for her return. Because of them the dam was anxious. There was no risk too small to be avoided when she had those three bundles of downy greyish-yellow fur to protect.

There were no danger sounds; no danger smells. Her keen senses worked faithfully, distinguishing, sorting, eliminating,

reassuring. She caught the scent of pollen: sallow catkins on the other side of the river: golden male catkins on one tree, silver females on another. She smelt cattle: heifers had watered near by as they did every day, coming down and trampling a bog of black mud beneath the almond-leaved willows. The musky odour of vole was there, too, for the narrow river teemed with the little brown-coated swimmers, who lopt down flagstems and loosestrife for food, or grubbed about for caddisworms and fresh-water snails. A hundred and one messages came on the flaws of wind, and the mother knew that hunting was safe.

Sounds were less urgently heeded. The bitch heard—and ignored, once she had decided. Sheep were bleating on the hillock-land forty yards beyond the river: they were mostly hoggets, ‘keepers’ pastured and tended by the farmer for ten shillings each a year. The bitch heard another bleating: the sound of snipe drumming above the narrow strip of riverflat. The birds would rise in towering circles and then shoot steeply down, with wings half-open and tail fan-wide, the outer feathers bent sharply away so that the air made them vibrate, and the booming note was caused. Way back in the spinney that joined the flat, blackbirds were still mikmikking hysterically, as though the wisps of mist were ghosts floating up. Presently the quaver of tawny owls would come closer and the blackbirds might have real cause for alarm.

Calmly the otter entered the water. Her smooth grey-brown body made no sound as it left the sandy spit, for the tapering tail let off gradually and carefully. A growing ripple on the surface and then no more than a flat head could have been seen bobbing dimly under the leaning willows.

In an osier a moorhen saw and moved higher on the smooth perch. Tiny crumbs of dried mud scraped from the bird’s claws and quipped in the water.

The otter was heading upstream.

Little light was there now, save an ochreish frieze round the skyline, pouring its faintness through the curtains of the river, alders and willows and hawthorns, and charging the water with a pale flush.

Minnows, little gold and green fellows, were feeding under the bank. With becoming self-flattery they darted panic-stricken here and there at the sight of the black shape; but the bitch did not heed them. Such small fry were to the kingfishers and grebes. The otter swam steadily on, sometimes ducking her head and

examining every crevice and rock she passed. Using all four legs she went under the little hunting bridge, and forty strokes higher up she came to the first pool she was seeking : a deep dark cavity, usually profitable of hunting.

The bitch dived. Under water she could close her nostrils at will ; while her ears, too, were sealed, "by folds of skin. Nature had been generous to the otters when they changed their environment.

A swarm of bubbles wobbled out and up. The bitch weaved down and round the banks, her forelegs tucked on her chest, hind-legs moving gently. When she wished to turn her long tail ruddered her round. Lithe and sinuous, she was more like an eel than a mammal as she slipped through the dark pool. She could see several times her own length in front of her, and when she nosed under the sides of boulders and ledges her sensitive whiskers, longer and stiffer than those of a cat, told her whether there was prey.

There was none. The pool proved empty. Not even a loach did she put up from the pebbled bed. A graceful curve of her body, and she swung up to vent. As her head broke surface, she caught sight of movement on the farther slope of the pool. A fish was finning down with the stream.

In an instant the only sign of the otter remaining on the surface was an undulating ring that spread and died. Below the surface the deep of the water was broken in two swirls that presently rippled upwards : one big, one small.

The otter swept down, kicking with all four legs to reach the fish before it found refuge under some inaccessible slab. Her prey was a brown trout : a fellow of three pounds. He had fed that day mainly on others of his kind. At the moment his mouth gaped open and revealed the tail of a young woodmouse. The mouse had tumbled into the water as the trout was nosing under a lily pad. Now the trout was having difficulty in swallowing the furry creature.

Down flashed the fish to a niche he knew beneath a green, weed-slimy boulder. He knew every cranny in the pool, and every pool in the river.

He darted obliquely, scales gleaming whitely. The otter's webbed paws trod bottom, and with every muscle of her body stretched, she curved supply, turned in her length, and raced after the trout. She swam faster than the fish, and headed him off from the boulder.

He made instead for the bank. Gills waving, he lay under a

loamy ledge. The exertion of the chase had forced the dead mouse out of his jaws. It floated uncertainly like a dead leaf, and rested momentarily on the otter's shoulders as she paddled alongside, searching carefully. In a little while she put the trout out. He zigzagged again for his boulder, but this time the bitch swam above him and took him near the shoulder fin with her head bent down between her forepaws.

She rose and went straight out of the pool and upstream until she came to a low flat slab of stone, fringed with short daffodils and fern. The rock gleamed already with the scales of many other fish taken in fair chase, for it had long been a regular landing-place of otters, who preferred to use places their kindred had used before them. Because of such habits, many otters were trapped, and once beautiful bodies went to decorate some keeper's gibbet, arranged with tender pride.

Such trapping benefited the crows and the blowflies: the crows pecked out the dead eyes; the blowflies laid their eggs on the carcasses.

The bitch ate the trout from the shoulder downward. She fed noisily, gnawing sideways like a cat will. She was hungry. Only the head and tail did she ignore. In the morning nothing but a few fresh scales would give proof of the meal, for scavenging rats would clear up the remnants.

. . . . .

When she had fed and drunk, she entered the river and continued upstream. She swam more joyfully, for her first anxiety had passed now that she had hunted successfully. Her blunt muzzle cleft the waters and the ripples she caused shattered the star reflections that gathered on the surface. But the real stars winked on, gleaming down through greening trees.

A small dark shape moving from one bank to the other, twelve yards away, proved to be a water vole. Fear-stricken, the rodent dived. The otter followed playfully, passing under the vole, without molesting him. She wanted fish, not musky meat; though if needs had dictated she would not have spurned it. The vole rose to the surface and scrambled rather than swam across the remaining piece of water. Terror almost burst its heart as it gained the damp tunnel behind the sentinel flags.

The huntress passed on, searching the back-eddies under the bank, where weeds waved like streamers: diving, turning, twisting,

floating; every movement revelling fiercely in the joy of hunting, and confident in the power of her body.

Near the wooden cattle-bridge she dived and passed under water until she was the other side of the shaky structure. One moon-night she had been frightened by two lovers who threw stones into the water, though not at her, and ever since then she had passed out of sight of any who might be watching.

Fifteen yards away she took a loach, feeding near the mud of a cattle-place. But loach were small, and she caught several others ere her needs were appeased. She had herself to feed, and, more important still, the three hungry cubs. Every drop of milk she provided never seemed sufficient.

Presently she left the river and ran out into the flat. Cows were there, sturdy little Dexters, some lying down: a farmer's sign of rain, which the ochreish band round the twilight skyline confirmed.

The waking cows ceased chewing the cud and stared dully at the dim shape trotting, low-bellied, by them. One of them, in-calf, snorted and put her horns down at the bitch; but the latter moved lightly aside through the dew-soaked grass and knapweed. She had long ago learnt that cows were harmless, even though they bore a man-taint above their own warm smell.

The otter ran on at a steady trot. The sound of her going was heard by browsing rabbits and foraging field voles. The rabbits sat up; stared; stamped with their muscled hindlegs, and scuttled discreetly into their burrows. The voles crouched in their minute tunnels under the grass roots.

Owls were quartering the narrow water meadow. Soft white wings wafted the air above the otter, and a scream broke the silence of the open land. The bitch crouched and snarled, and the barn owl sheered away from the gleaming eyes.

. . . . .

Many unsuccessful minutes later, the otter rejoined the river at the point where it finished its serpentine loop. She paddled through the trees, then flattened a moment on the low bank, listening. A flute-like whistle, many yards away, echoed down the surface. Three times she let her mate whistle before she answered.

She took to the water and paddled easily upstream. The whistle echoed out again, and now she answered call for call until she saw the bobbing of the dog otter's head as he swam down-river to meet her.

There was much play then. They rolled and tagged in the water, biting and snapping in fun. Then they climbed out and played again until the rattle of flints made them start in mock-fear and roll into the stream once more.

The bitch was several pounds lighter than the boisterous dog, and so she tired of the play, and leaving him, went to squat on the bank, worrying at the ticks that ravaged her skin under the thick close fur. More than once she rolled on the stones and rubbed her neck where she could not reach otherwise.

The dog otter remained in the water, floating and ducking idly, and snapping at the water-stars. He had fed richly that night, both on fish and an immature Aylesbury drake, which he had pulled under at sunset, even as a farm-girl came out calling 'Dill-dill-dill-dilly!' So the dog was well content.

Soon the bitch joined him, and together they went downstream, swimming in line, the bitch leading. Their short round heads bobbed and the nostrils flirted the water. They swam easily with the current; sometimes they floated, their hindlegs splayed out by their tails. But floating or swimming, their motion was so smooth that none but the vigilants of the wild could have known who was passing on the river.

In the loop named the Hullies on account of the pollarded willows growing there, from which gypsies gathered long pliant shoots wherewith to make baskets and 'hullies,' the otters came across a huge pike making his piratical way against the current.

The fish whipped round and made away downstream. Smaller fish fled before him. The pike weighed twelve pounds—half the weight of the bitch otter herself. He was several years old and his deadliest enemy was the river-keeper. On the fish's back, just above the broad tail, was a whitish scar, where, long ago, a labourer's dungfork had caught him a glancing blow; for whenever the pike was sighted everyone near by lent a hand, with prong and stick and even once a gun. But never more than wounds had been dealt out to him.

Now, terror-stricken, the olive-barred pirate wove downstream. But the hunters, intrigued by such a quarry, soon overhauled him. He dived lower and passed under the bitch who had purposely shot over him to make him double back. The slower dog met him. Well fed, the otter was careless, and his teeth only nicked the fish above the dorsal fin.

The pike half-rolled to avoid the bite and darted into the weeds.

The bitch otter, now returned and fierce for blood, drove him out and seized him behind his villainous-looking head. There followed a short, terrific battle. The bitch, unprepared for such a powerful victim, had all she could do in fighting the fish. Down they went, and mud and sand clouded the lashed water.

The dog otter floated and watched.

The pike was game as he was strong. The bitch's hold was insecure, and suddenly, with a clack that drove a lace of bubbles upwards, her teeth met. The pike had wrenched free, at the cost of a mouthful of flesh. Blood mingled with the cloudy water.

Spent, the pike made for the shelter of the bank. The bitch rose to vent and dived again immediately and sought him out. The pike faced about as she came, her body in one straight graceful line, and pugnacious as ever, even though he was wounded, snapped at his pursuer. He had teeth that would bite through bone. But the end was near. This time the bitch got a firm grip near the gills, and gradually the struggles weakened.

With great difficulty the otter bore her prey to the bank and lugged herself out. The dog followed. Though she was not hungry she hissed at him and he withdrew mildly.

The bitch hesitated while the pike flipped feebly in the grass. Then deliberately she nosed the gleaming body back into the water. The pike splashed in and sulked down to the bottom, too weak to seize this opportunity of escape.

The dog otter saw what had happened and dived. The bitch was not far behind. Their bodies touched as they swept down. The bitch won the race. She caught the fish by the snout and as she trod the bed she tried to throw him over her shoulder. But he was too heavy and rolled over her back. She played with him a little while, and allowed the dog to join the fun. Then she seized the dying pike and laboured with him to the bank.

She had killed wantonly, enjoying the game of killing.

She crunched once, a mighty bite from the shoulder, while the fish still jerked towards death. Blood spotted the reeds.

She finished her mouthful and then squatted down and scratched with a webbed paw at a tic lodging behind one small round hairy ear. Then she ran a little way along the bank and presently took to water and joined her mate.

. . . . .  
As the very first faint sign of approaching dawn, a pale glow



above Dewgates Wood, woke the little birds and set them twittering and singing while it was yet too dark to feed, the bitch otter came to the hover. Snarling, she had driven the dog away when he was too inquisitive. Foodhappy, he had gone off docilely. He had swum downstream towards the drain in which he hovered by day. The drain ran under a disused, grass-obliterated track, along which, years ago, an old half-demented charcoal-burner had been wont to lead his horse; for here there had once been many fine alders, until the old man ruined them by his continual despoiling. Once the rough black bark of alder had a reputation for the good charcoal it provided for the gunpowder mills.

A grey, sleek, wet-gleaming shadow, the bitch drew herself up on to the spit and bellied under the tree. The 'spur' of her paws remained behind on the sand.

The three cubs were waiting eagerly for her. An hour since they had woken and mewed plaintively. When she did not come they played half-heartedly, gnawing each other's paws, and halting now and then to listen for a sound that would tell of their mother's coming. They were three weeks old now, and growing plumper each day. Their fur was still downy and greyish-yellow. Their blunt heads were wrinkled comically about the black noses. They had been blind when they were born, but after the tenth day their eyes had been round lively gleams, interested in everything, even though they comprehended little, in their confined quarters.

Now their mother had returned they were happy. And so was she. She sniffed them all, one by one. Then, satisfied that no harm had befallen them during her absence, she lay down on one moist side and let the cubs crowd about her flanks, and while the milk went from her, her whole body and brain glowed with pride and happiness.

And presently there was silence in the dark warm nest: silence but for the easy breathing of the bitch and the slobbering eager baby noises of the feeding cubs.

## II.

### *THE THEFT.*

For the twentieth time the boy affectionately regarded the two large eggs lying in his broken-nailed hand. They were a fine pair, bluish-white and strongly splashed with dark red-brown. There

was no doubt about it, Dewgates was a fine place for nesting. Carefully he put the trophies away, one in each pocket of his jacket. He stared up at the dark mass of trees. Perhaps he should'a taken all three while he was there. Still, it was no use climbing that pine again. Doing so once had been a big enough job. He glanced down at the scratches on his legs, and fell to dabbing them with a wet finger. Funny taste, had blood. He licked his finger meditatively. His eye caught sight of a three-sided rent in his shorts, and he grimaced in anticipation. Anyway, a pair of sparrowhawk eggs was worth any amount of tribulation, especially in the middle of April. He'd never known 'em so early. One for himself, and for the other Fatty Purkiss would give him at least sixpence. Perhaps he might even squeeze a bob out of him. He knew jolly well that Fatty was afraid to climb a tree himself.

'Come on, Pinkie,' the boy bade the terrier squatting near by. The shivering dog joyfully obeyed. He pranced down the pine-needle carpet and presently the boy started trotting after him. Must be getting late, though there was still much light in the sky. It was scrummy being in the woods at this time of year, never knowing what the next bush was going to surrender to you.

Boy and dog ran on down the sloping wood. Here and there they crushed bluebells as they went, some already flowering. But there were not many, nor many primroses, except on the banks between wood and riverflat; for under the trees there was too much rubble, pine needle and scrawny grass.

Every tree was breaking into green. Every tree had its different tint. And the blackthorns were beginning to shed their snow-petalled starry flowers as their tardier leaves still unfurled.

Black nose to ground, the terrier ran out into the riverflat and the boy followed. Pinkie bit grass and snuffled excitedly at each likely bolthole; and once he inspected carefully a patch of dry cowdung, until the boy gave him a sly kick on the flank with the side of his boot. The boy turned a cartwheel and in the middle of it remembered the eggs. Panic-stricken, he searched his pockets, but the prizes were intact.

Presently the pair came to the river-bank. With any luck he might find a moorhen's nest. A sparrowhawk and a moorhen in the same day: Golly, that would be good. A loud indignant metallic call from downriver indicated that the moorhen was a reader of thoughts.

Pinkie joined in the search. He nosed into every osier and

willow root, his black-and-white rump quivering with excitement. He rustled through reeds and flags and ranunculus. And suddenly—so suddenly that the boy jumped—he began to yelp hysterically, his voice rising muffled from the ground.

The boy trotted back and found Pinkie trying to force his way under the rotten bark of the hollow tree.

‘What is it, what is it?’ The boy inspected the shell. ‘Only a rabbit?’ He stood on the edge of the loamy bank and looked down on to the plant-screened entrance. Then on the sandy spit just below, he caught sight of the telltale spur, broad and distinctive.

‘Otter!’ he whispered, in a thrilled tone, and large-eyed, he glanced round involuntarily. Then, pushing Pinkie aside, he fell on his belly and tried to see into the hover. He could not, and presently got to his knees and tried to make the terrier go into the water and reach the entrance. But Pinkie was water-shy, and when the boy picked him up he whined and wriggled.

‘You’re no good,’ said the boy, dropping the dog. He sat on the bank and proceeded to take off his boots and stockings.

The coldness of the water was like a pain in his hairless brown legs, but he was so excited he ignored it. Knee-deep, he stood, and breast pressed against the bank he reached his arm into the hover. All he could feel was damp earth and roots. If only he had a spade or something. He stopped groping and looked about him. By the time he’d gone to the mill and back it would be too dark. He shivered. Here was a treasure of far greater value than mere birds’ eggs, and he wasn’t going to miss it.

Suddenly he had an idea. And without stopping to put on boots or stockings, he leapt up the bank and ran along the flat. There was that iron crowbar by the hunting bridge. It had been left one year by Peter Gander after a badgerdig in Dewgates. Pinkie followed him a little way and then raced back to the hover.

Two minutes later the boy returned, panting, the bar heavy and cold in his hands.

The dull thump of the crowbar startled the water voles across the river, and they cowered in their holes. And the sound tremored out through the earth of the flat, so that rabbits living in the buries by the ploughland thought others of their kind were sending out an alarm. And they, too, stayed underground until a more auspicious time.

In the nest, the cubs heard the noise and trembled. The yapping of the terrier had made them hiss and snarl instinctively,

showing their little milk teeth beneath the thin black lips. Now as the thumping overhead grew louder they cowered back in the corner, warm palpitating bodies pressed against each other, trembling anew at each blow of the crowbar, and wondering where their mother was, and why she did not come.

The bitch otter had left the hover twenty minutes before, while the boy had still been raiding the sparrowhawk's stick-nest.

There had still been light in the sky when she swam out, for at this time of the year the sun did not set until nearly seven o'clock. Snipe had been feeding in the strips of mud beyond the osier-bed when the bitch's whiskery face appeared behind the kingcups. The birds had risen with a short cry of *scaap* and zigzagged away over the trees.

Now the bitch was nearly a mile away, her graceful body curving in the pellucid water as she turned after a slow-finned dusky green chub.

Feverishly the boy worked, jabbing the iron into the soft shallow bank; breaking it away from a place near the hole. He could tell by the hollow sound that he was on the right track. He worked until the slim immature muscles of his arms ached, and the small of his back was clammy with sweat. But otter cubs—the thought made him hurry. He'd tame 'em and train 'em to fish. What 'ud Fatty Purkiss say to that?

Pinkie hindered rather than helped, with his hysterical yelping and darting here and there. More than once his spine was nearly split by the plunging crowbar; but presently the boy accidentally barged him off the bank. Pinkie fell with a splash and paddled round, silent, too full of water to yilpittyyelp. When he found he could swim he went back to the spit and snuffled in the hole.

At last, when it was almost too dark to see, the boy felt the soil give way. He had effectively wrecked the hover. The top was a dark-brown gash.

The boy knelt down and groped into the earth. An exclamation of triumph gulped from his lips. His fingers had closed on a warm squirming body. He drew it up and gazed admiringly at the downy cub, hissing frantically at him and doing its best to bite him, its little face wrinkled up in a baby snarl.

Pinkie jiggled about, standing on his hindlegs and trying to inspect the prize. His natural curiosity got the better of him and he leapt high at the boy's outheld hand and caught the cub in his jaws.

Shouting inarticulately with rage, the boy jumped to his feet and dealt out a full-armed blow on the terrier's flank. Startled and hurt, Pinkie dropt the cub and yelped. Stumpy tail between legs, he circled round, gazing reproachfully at his master. What else was the cub for but to play with? Ilpilp, that wasn't fair of you, master.

Dismayed, and near tears, the boy had picked up the little kittenlike body. The damage had been done: Pinkie's teeth had crushed the delicate frontlet above the frightened eyes. For a moment the boy stared at it. Then he craned round to see where the dog had gone. His face darkened with anger, and scrambling up, he hurled one of his boots at the waiting Pinkie, anxiously watching events from a discreet distance.

Then the boy remembered there might be other cubs. He lay down once more and groped. This time he stood up while he examined the hissing cubs, holding them safely out of Pinkie's reach. Then he shouted the dog away, and, taking the eggs out of his pockets, stowed the wriggling cubs in their place. Having donned his boots and stockings, he loped away through the gloom, his whole body nervous with excited triumph.

The fawning Pinkie trotted after him, his black nose wavering up towards the bulging side-pockets, at each of which a round puckered face appeared, mewing pitifully and helplessly.

. . . . .

In Dewgates Wood, badger setts were extensive: expertly tunnelled galleries that ran back scores of yards into the hill—indeed, Grandpa Dauntsey, who had once been head-keeper on the estate, swore how once a terrier had been put in on one side of the hill and that he'd come out on the other side, a quarter-mile away. How true that was, no one knew, but nor did anyone dispute it, for old Dauntsey was a nice old man even though he had been a gamekeeper.

Now the main sett was little used by the kith of the original builders. Mostly it was foxes and rabbits who used the place. Only one badger was left in Dewgates. He was an old, old boar: his head was pitted with a dozen scars where foolhardy terriers and foxes had joustured with him. His mate had been killed a year ago: her striped head had been smashed in by the same crowbar that had wrecked the otter's hover.

This night the old boar was abroad in the riverflat. Night was

on the run, as the glimmer on the water showed; though dawn was still distant two hours and more.

The badger waddled down towards the bank. He had fed well and now he was thirsty. Half an hour since he had dug out a litter of week-old rabbits, blind and deaf. His jaws had run with blood.

His long striped head swayed solemnly as he humped through the drenched grass. He kept to the shelter of the trees and made his way steadily towards his accustomed drinking-place, a secluded corner beyond the osiers, padded and pitted by vole and weasel and moorhen.

All at once the dignified progress was broken.

The boar grunted and nose to ground circled round. His keen nostrils, ever ready to receive any message the air might bring, had caught the faint scent of the dead cub, and in a moment he blundered across it. He snuffed it and turned it over with his snout, debating all the while whether to gobble up the morsel, for he was already too full to be very eager for more food.

As he inspected the stiff little body, a sound in the rimy grass—there had been a frost that night—made him jerk up his flat-browed head and glare with beady eyes along the bank.

The bitch otter had returned.

She had left the river by the osier-bed and trotted along the flat. She saw and winded the old boar before he sighted her. The hair of her body went creeping up in one long hackle from neck to tail. Her brain worked instinctively. To her, the badger's presence near the precious hover was no mere coincidence. Anxiety made her pant loudly. She crouched and, belly to earth, ran past the striped head. And as she went, another scent made her halt and turn. Head hunched into shoulders she stayed glaring wild-eyed at the boar. The familiar cub-scent, cold but definite. And to the anguished dam there was only one explanation. The brock had found the hover and dug out the beloved cubs.

Uneasy and watchful, the boar stood ready, yellow fangs bared. He was old, and knew his vulnerability. A low rumbling snarl, that seemed to start deep down in his belly, told the bitch he was prepared. But in her present state she would have braved much more than a badger's jaws. When her cubs are in danger a wild animal has no thought of her own safety.

Every nerve tense, every hair bristling, the frantic otter wove round the grey. She had seen the cub lying in front of him. She did not know it was dead.

The boar moved slowly round so that he always faced her. He did not wish to fight, but until he was safely out of reach he would not turn his back on the bitch. His swinish eyes burned red as the half-light caught them.

Next instant the two bodies merged like shadows. The bitch had attacked. The badger moved to meet her, fangs ready. The lithe bitch leapt clean over the raised head, and before the slow-moving boar could turn, she had seized him by the throat below the left ear. Had she not leapt, and had the badger grappled with her, she would have stood little chance: she weighed twenty-four pounds. The badger was ten ounces short of forty pounds. But he was slow. His teeth were blunt with age. Yet for all that his jaws were deadly powerful, and once they closed on the bitch's slim body they would not release their hold, whatever wounds the boar suffered. As it was, there was little battle in the encounter.

The night air was shattered by a babel of noise: snarling and panting; click of fangs; scuffle of paws shifting in rimy grass. The noise set moorhens off in the osiers, and farther down the bank a wren, a brown ball of nervous energy, woke and spluttered into fitful scolding.

The bitch held on, panting through her closed mouth and nostrils, rammed up against the badger's neck. The boar struggled, snapped, and kept up a guttural growling. Head to head, flank to flank, the two bodies circled slowly, the bitch biting, biting, the brock trying to come to grips.

Then the badger got a forepaw on the otter's shoulder. Sheer weight bore her down. She had to release her hold; but her fangs had gashed the boar from below the ear to dangerously near the jugular. White bristles ran with blood.

In an instant the badger was on top of the bitch, but her sinuous body snaked clear. Only the bare-lipped short incisors left a mark. They slashed one round ear to ribbons.

The night ceased to be affronted by the battle-snarls.

For a moment the bitch hesitated. The badger did not. He lumbered away through the eerie light. Except perhaps in mating-time no wild animal fights for the sake of fighting: wounds are too great a liability. The wound of one day may mean death or hunger the next.

The bitch watched him go and then ran towards the hover. She arched back, hissing and snarling. She had smelt man and dog. Compared with this common enemy, the badger was a harm-

less old grubdigger. Anxiety rose above fear, and the bitch approached the hollow tree.

Half-crazed with terror and apprehension, she found the hover wrecked ; naught but a mass of wet soil, sweet-smelling of bruised grass. But above the fragrance of grass was this hated man-scent. She thrust her head through the light pile of soil blocking the entrance. She could find nothing, except the litter of the nest. She backed out hurriedly and ran up the bank and round the tree. But she could find nothing, though she quested here and there, panting in her anguish. Nothing but the lingering smell of boy and dog and the beloved cub-scent.

She ran out to the dead cub and sniffed it tenderly. But it was cold and stiff and she did not understand. She licked the body, but it did not respond. Presently she left grieving over it and padded back to the hover. Many times did she pad to and fro, questing round the marigolds and the tender green-yellow cowslips that grew farther away in the flat ; but not a sign of the cubs did she find, except that familiar scent, mingling with the man-stink. And after a time she ceased to circle roundabout and began to nose out the line. It was still quite strong and easy to follow, and led her straight along the silent bank.

### III.

#### *ROUGH JUSTICE.*

Hamseyholy Mill was a towering black mass against the faint dawn sky. In sunshine it was a patchwork of contrasted colour, of red tile and blue tile ; buff weatherboards and puce walls ; green moss and ivy. But now it was all one, its roofs and gables jaggling out high above the river. The last stars were twinkling sleepily. The last barn owls were bobbing across the meadows to roost in hollow tree and rafter.

This was not the first time the bitch otter had been through the mill. She had caught her first grayling three furlongs away, and once, less than a year ago, she had taken refuge in a culvert from the motley hounds of the Hartilout pack.

Nearly an hour had passed since she left the ruined hover. She had gone at a good swinging trot along the riverflat. For the most part the trail had been easy for her sharp nostrils to ravel out. Presently, however, when the cub-scent faded, she was uncertain,



and dallied, whining and searching here and there, yearning for the cubs. Then she had gone on and once more picked up the man-trail.

Her body had been a mass of expectancy. She could not know how long the boy had been gone. She knew, or reasoned, that where the man- and dog-scent led, there her cubs were. There had been no badger-stink near the hover itself to confuse her.

She had grown desperate and impatient when the trail grew difficult, as it sometimes did—broken by mud or ditch or cattle—but always she puzzled it out and persevered, for the fire was still high within her. No animal has a keener sense of smell than the otter.

Nor was she deterred when she found where the trail was leading. She bellied over the millbridge. The thunder of the distant weir did not alarm her. She knew it well.

She padded along the road and approached the mill. And suddenly the trail ended before the tall wooden doors flush with the moss-crannied walls. She ran up and down, snuffling everywhere. Then she picked up another scent. Then another. And pattered round frenziedly, confused. There was man-scent everywhere now, a maze of it, for boots had trampled here all day and every day.

She ran under the shadow of the granary, questing wildly. She could not understand this turn of events. She had been so certain that where the trail lay, there would she find her loved ones. Now she was at a loss and did not know what to do.

She ran over coils of rope and wisps of husks, all smelling vaguely of man. She no longer snarled at the scent, as she would ordinarily, but inspected more closely the thing that bore the taint.

A rat ran out of a crevice and hesitated when he smelt blood. Then he pattered away, panic-stricken, having seen whose blood it was. The bitch had been hardly conscious of the pain in her torn ear.

She was consumed with anguish and anxiety, caused by the greatest of instincts: motherlove. Sometimes this instinct is weak, according to the subject, and then it dies. But when it is strong, no other motive is stronger, and only death will halt its working.

At last she left the mill wall and padded across the raised road. She looked round, uncertain, before slipping into the water. Her claws scrabbled faintly on the wooden piles. She paddled easily along by the dark structure, fragrant with the fresh cold scent of water weeds. Her sleek side almost brushed against the slimy

stones and wood as she drifted, like a floating skin on the surface but for the gleaming watchful round eyes staring out.

She came to the corner of the little bridge—and out of the water a biting something seemed to leap: something that caught one hind limb near the paw, and bit and held her savagely. She struggled and ducked and rolled in the water, hissing and snarling at this unknown foe. She tried to swim away; but there was a rattle of chain and she was pulled back unceremoniously.

The jaws of a submerged rat-gin had seized her. She was held fast, for the gin was chained to the sill running at the foot of the low arched bridge.

She fought it until she was exhausted and her leg hurting like fire. Though the gin was powerful enough to hold her, it had not broken any bones, nor cut the skin. The teeth of it were round and blunt and not intended for such a victim.

When the bitch found she could not get away, she drew herself up on to the broad sill and fell to biting fiercely at the indifferent trap. She left her mark on it. However, that was no use. She only hurt her jaws. She gave it up, and crouched, waiting.

Instinctively she watched the top of the bridge, knowing that men passed that way. She was panting. Her grey body pressed in against the brickwork to gain all the cover possible.

There was full light now, and the broad glossy waters gleamed; folding and fluting out like molten lead in the sunbeams that strove through the screen of willows.

Now there was movement in the mill. The otter heard it. She slid silently from the sill; but still the inexorable chain held her. She could not understand this. Her leg was numb now and she could not feel the gin gripping her, except when it pulled her back. When she had stayed under water till there was no breath left in her lungs she crawled sullenly on to the stone. A few moments' rest and again she leapt. Four times more did she try. And four times more was she brought to a sudden halt that made the muscles of her thighs ache. At last she had to admit defeat. Weary and frightened, she lay there palpitating.

. . . . .

Fifteen minutes later the bitch's prominent eyes flashed wildly at the news her small ears brought. Hobnailed boots were moving across the gravel in front of the mill. The boots belonged to a carter. He was inspecting the traps. The mill was riddled with

rat-runs. Each morning the carter made his round, resetting those gins which had been sprung and throwing any victims to the razor-backed hog in the sty beyond the chestnut trees.

Nearer came the footsteps. The bitch flattened down, her eyes fixed on the bridge, waiting for the man to pass. He did not. He peered over, hoping he would not have to climb down to reset the gin, for he had a dread of falling in and being swirled away on the little rapid caused by jags of rock a few yards above the bridge. It took some moments for his dull brain to realise what had happened. Open-mouthed, he gazed down at the crouching otter, hissing defiantly at him.

Then he turned round and let forth an invitation :

‘Hey, Mas’ Tidey ! Come’n see what we’ve catched !’

Other footsteps came across the gravel and a second face peered down at the prisoner.

‘Otter,’ observed the miller laconically. ‘That’ll be the mother. After them cubs Billy brought home. By Job,’ he went on, admiration in his voice, ‘she’s unaccountable plucky to come here like so. ’Tis a good three or four mile across the meadows ’cording to where Billy said he took ’em from. She must have been het up about it, to puzzle out the way so far.’

‘Iss, surely,’ the carter agreed, looking at the bitch with a speculative eye. She’d make a hem good skin. And if he caught Bludding the river-keeper in a good mood, he might get a bob out of him. . . .

‘Climb down by the railings, George, and let her go,’ the miller ordered.

‘Eh ?’ George did not comprehend such folly. ‘Let un goo, Mas’ Tidey ? But——’

‘Go on,’ Tidey returned curtly. ‘We an’t turning collectors, are we ?’ He had wanted his son to take the cubs back to the river, but the boy wheedled permission to keep them.

The carter grunted but did not demur, except to protest that the otter would bite if he tried to handle her. Master was a fool ; still, a chap durstn’t say so.

‘Ah, maybe she would,’ said the miller. ‘Hop oaver to the yard and fetch a pole.’

George slouched away reluctantly. Arms resting on the white coping-stone, the miller stayed watching the bitch.

‘Well,’ he said conversationally, his voice low against the noise of water, ‘I wouldn’t have put that gin there, lady, if you’d

minded to tell me you were a-comin', lookee. Reckon you desarved better'n that. Leastaways, them's my sentiments, though they beant everyone's. Noa, not by long chalks.'

But the otter did not understand. She crouched there mouthing at him, and expecting death, though she was still prepared to fight until that should come.

When the carter returned, bearing a ten-foot ash pole, Billy ran out after him, yelling excitedly to know what was 'on.' George told him. The precocious Pinkie pranced after them, sniffing at the carter's gaiters.

'Keep quiet,' the miller bade the boy. 'She's tarrified enough as it is, without you yawping in her ear. And hold that dog fast or back you go to the house.'

'What're you going to do, feyther?' asked the boy, setting himself and Pinkie on the coping. Boy and dog gazed down wide-eyed, Pinkie shivering with excitement. He began to struggle and whine.

'Master's gooin' to let un goo,' George informed Billy. His tone was acid.

The miller laughed calmly. 'Ay. That I am. Give me the pole, George, and doan't look so glum about it all.'

'Oah, Dad, woan't 'ee keep her?' the boy pled in a whisper. 'We could tame all three then——'

'You keep quiet, I tell 'ee, son,' the man answered warmly. 'You fair 'maze me. You've only to see an animal and you want to kill un or cage un.'

'Oah, but Dad.'

The miller paused in manoeuvring the pole.

'Now,' he warned, grimly. 'One more peek out of you, Billy, and I'll baste 'ee with this.'

The carter winked.

The bitch tried to bite the pole, but the miller persisted, and after several attempts, deftly pressed open the gin and slid it away from the wounded leg.

'Go on, silly, go on,' he urged, for the otter did not realise she was free, her leg being numb. She lay flattened, spitting like a cat. The miller pushed the pole into her side. She leapt off the sill and immediately climbed back.

'She likes you too much, Mas'r,' George guffawed, still feeling sore. 'She mun've found out that 'ee belonged to the R.S.P.C.A., she mun.'

'If anyone toald me you were a wit, George,' murmured Mr. Tidey, still prodding the bitch, 'I'd say they wuz half right.'

At the third attempt he made the otter dive. This time she struck out and away. But she swam tardily, for her leg was dead until the circulation started again. The tapering tail helped her on her way. She had difficulty making headway against the current. However, she kept on, and, crossing the flow obliquely, drew in closer to the calmer waters near the bank.

Suddenly on the bridge there was a flash of white. Pinkie had slipped his collar, though not without the furtive connivance of the boy.

'Come back,' shouted the miller, his face congesting with anger. He crashed the pole down, but Pinkie had leapt from the coping-stone on to the bridle-path that kept the river company. Yapping frantically, his bloodlust roused, he raced along the mossy bank. He ran faster than the otter could swim, and soon drew level with the bobbing head.

Alarmed, the bitch hissed and dived. A moment's hesitation, and then the shivering foolhardy terrier took gingerly to water and struck out after the otter.

When the bitch knew she was being followed she turned and dived again and came up under the dog. There was no fight. What struggle there was ended in less time than it would have taken the bitch to beach a four-pound trout.

Pinkie was too busy fighting against the current to be able to fight his other foe. Savagely the bitch caught him by the throat. She bit and bit until her teeth met and her mouth was full of blood and water. As they drifted towards the bridge, she pulled Pinkie down and the struggling bodies churned the water silver.

Gamely the terrier tried to come to grips, fighting with his paws: he could not bite, for the bitch was under him, fanging the life out of him. And soon the struggles diminished and Pinkie's eyes dimmed. The bitch let go, for she had to rise to vent. The dog tried to rise, too, but his struggles now did not even cause foam. A last swarm of bubbles dithered up and burst. Then the walls of his lungs collapsed. The current dragged him along just below the surface. On the bank the boy hesitated, uncertain whether to wade in. His father shouted him away. He ran back to the bridge.

The black-and-white body, now pink about neck and shoulders, bumped against the slimy rocks and then shot under the bridge, under the staring eyes of the men.

The boy and the carter hurried to the other side. The boy had not yet properly grasped what had happened, so terrifyingly quick had it all been.

Then dead Pinkie appeared again, and the boy's brain was suddenly pierced with realisation. His lips quivered and then unconsciously wailed out his thoughts aloud:

'Pinkie was worth more'n a pair of filthy cubs!'

For a moment he watched the swirling body being borne farther away. He began to weep quietly. George grinned sheepishly, and looked from one to the other.

'Ay, maybe so,' the father said calmly. 'But 'twas your own fault. You'll be able to fetch him out when he comes up against the eyot.'

He had not turned as he spoke. He was still watching the bobbing head of the bitch. She was swimming more easily now, where the current was less turbulent. She grew smaller in the distance and presently looked the size of a water vole. Then she went from view altogether, and the watcher on the bridge turned and walked away to the millhouse. Breakfast had been ready long since.

. . . . .  
That night the boy cried himself to sleep, high up in the millhouse. Once in a waking he thought he heard a whistle, and throwing off the clothes, he slipped across to the little window. But there was nothing outside, save the vast velvet night; the dull-gleaming black river, swirling on endlessly; the looming bastion of willows athwart the road; whilst in the calm wide stretch between weir and bridge, a cloud of stars danced to the tune of the lap-lap of water against the piles. And above all was the distant subdued roar of the weir, so even that it became part of the night's silence. Everything seemed to be so much vaster in the nightgleam, and presently, awed by this vastness, the boy shivered and stumbled back to the warm sheets.

Far away, four miles away, in the boskage at the foot of Dewgates, a real whistle sounded out. Flutelike and urgent, it echoed and died across the pellucid water. The bitch otter called in vain. Search she did, but never did she find, nor answer did she get to her whistling. The scent round the pillaged hover had grown stale and faded. Like the scent, so did the bitch's memory fade. And when three more dawns had shattered a night sky, she had forgotten much.

## MARKET DAY AT KARANGIA.

BY JANE WOODMAN.

I was awakened by the neighing of horses and recognised the deep-toned voice of Trojan, my chestnut, and the higher more hysterical notes of Saracen, D.'s black. They were tethered under a tree close by and for all the sound-proofing our grass shelter gave, might as well have been inside the hut. Through the open doorway I could see it was still bright moonlight, but there was that slight greyiness in the sky which shows that dawn is near. Far away I heard a faint neighing and again our horses answered. Near by a newly awakened donkey caught up the refrain and immediately set about transmitting it to its companions far and near. Donkeys, like a large family of children one of whom contracts an infectious disease, do not catch it all together and get it over. They seem to wait until the first has reached its final ear-splitting 'haw' before the next begins its 'hee,' and so on until it seems that there is no reason why they should ever finish.

I felt thoroughly peevish as one does when disturbed unnecessarily early after a bad night, for all the dogs in the neighbourhood had spent the night barking, fighting, baying the moon and generally rejoicing in their strength on the common ground near the rest-house, until at last we had had to get up and chase them off with a revolver. I pulled the blankets closer round me, tucked up my feet and sleepily fell to wondering what we could have for lunch. Why on earth did African cooks never make anything but baked custard unless specially instructed to do so, even though they knew how to make half the sweets in *Mrs. Beeton*?

The cocks were crowing lustily, dogs, donkeys and horses were singing their morning hymn; and now cattle, sheep and goats were being released from their thorn-hedged corrals and joining in the chorus as they wandered away to their feeding-grounds. Pandemonium let loose. I began to see the humour of the situation. Here was I, in the midst of the most romantic surroundings imaginable, so blasé that all I could find to think of was food! I told myself good-humouredly that I was a fool and dozed again.

Suddenly a low, resonant and mournful sound filled the hut. I remonstrated drowsily.

'Darling,' I murmured. 'Must you snore?'

'What! Now what the devil is all this?' Suddenly awakened, D. shot up in bed.

I shot up too and found that all this was a cow, which had strolled in by one door and was now about to make her way out by the other, mooing plaintively as she went. She was departing enriched to the extent of a pair of D.'s jodhpurs which she had detached with her horn from the rope over which they had been hanging, and which now lay in an abandoned attitude on her back. They had never ridden cow before and looked as though they meant to make the most of their opportunity.

'Boy!' yelled D.

There was a sound of bare feet running and an ejaculation of mingled astonishment and horror as Yaro arrived and met the cow face to face. There was also a thud and a crash of crockery, whereat we groaned in unison. Obviously Yaro had been on the point of bringing us our morning tea. The noise attracted the small-boy and cook, who came flying to the rescue, retrieved the errant jodhpurs, and sped the cow upon her way with resounding slaps on her rump. Luckily nothing was broken and soon fresh tea was made and we were sitting outside the hut sipping contentedly as we watched the sunrise.

The rest-house had been built on a good site, on top of a slight rise overlooking the native town at a respectable distance. Our shelter was simply a hut made of grass mats and close by were similar smaller huts to accommodate the boys, kitchen, etc. They had been put up for us in the rest-house compound, the proper rest-house having 'died,' the local headman regretfully informed us, the previous rains. Its ruins were still standing, and judging by their condition it had been 'dead' many rains. The boys had a great time hunting iguanas, especial delicacies to them, with spears in the remains of the thatched roof.

The town was now well awake, the *ladan* had long since called the faithful to prayer, and the smoke from the cooking fires went up accompanied by a mighty thumping as the women pounded the grain in their mortars for the morning meal. Already people were collecting in the market-place at the foot of the hill and a new sound began to edge its way through the din—a cross between the bellow of a tired bull and the roar of a peevish lion. Camels.



For the beggars, or rather the traders, were coming to town with their caravans of camels, donkeys and cattle all laden down to Plimsoll line. They were wild-looking men, some in rags, some in tags and some in velvet gown, though not many of the last. They all carried spears and staves and very often an armoury of knives and old-fashioned small arms as well; and many of them wore enormous picturesque straw hats, any one of which would have caused a gasp of envious admiration on the Lido. Some of the caravans were in the charge of pale-skinned Arabs with faces veiled below the eyes (a very sensible fashion in view of the clouds of dust stirred up by the feet of their charges), and the trains numbered anything from one to fifty. They brought sacks of ground nuts, grain or gum arabic, or great bales of hides. Some of the men rode their pack-animals, others walked beside them or bestrode unkempt horses with long straggling manes and tails. We could see them coming in their hundreds, converging on the town from every point of the compass, and soon every tree in sight—there were not many—had a group of men and animals parked in its shade. The late-comers who were unlucky just squatted on the sand wherever there was room for them.

All this was very exciting for our horses, which seemed to be on speaking terms with every other horse in the vicinity. They shrieked incessantly and tramped furiously round their picketing pegs in their efforts to get free and join in the fun, but they were securely hobbled and had not a chance. If they had got loose there would probably have been a free-for-all, as they were at the top of their form after weeks of trekking and full of beans and corn. No wonder they screamed and snorted with annoyance at their captivity. The horse-boys could do nothing to soothe them but cluck at them impotently and give them food in the vain hope of diverting their attention from other attractions. Grooming did no good and they tried to bite anyone who went within reach. In the course of the day they managed to break most of their leather hobble-ropes and in the evening Saracen got away and 'went to bush' like a flash of black lightning. A weary horse-boy returned with him many hours later, having chased him half across the province according to his own account, and having only caught him at last with the assistance of the entire population of the village near which he had found him. Saracen's escape did not do Trojan any good, but luckily his picketing pegs held. Luckily, or his boy might have had to cover more than half the province

in his pursuit, for did he not win the Maiden Mile last Autumn Meeting?

After breakfast we decided to visit the market, and set off followed by various native officials who were in D.'s train. At the bottom of the hill we were met by the *sarkin kasuwa*—the king of the market—who is a sort of overseer responsible for the conduct of the market, and half a dozen *dogarai*, or native police, who assist him in his office. In this land of romance anyone may be a king and many are. The term is used widely. The caretaker of the rest-house is the *sarkin bariki*, the head butcher is the *sarkin pawa*, and when your boy is extra stupid you tell him in his own picturesque language that he is the *sarkin muntua*—the king of forgetfulness.

The *sarkin kasuwa* was arrayed in flowing robes of pale blue, with a long white turban-cloth wound round and round his red felt fez and round his throat and chin. In the right hand he carried a wicked whip of rhinoceros hide and in the left his rosary of ebony beads. The *dogarai* wore garments like long white nightgowns slashed with V-shaped godets of red, and red turbans. They also carried whips, with the exception of one very old gentleman who leant upon a long stout staff. This dear old soul looked the very personification of dignified and benevolent old age, with his seamed face and gentle expression and his wrinkled hands which yet grasped his staff firmly. We learned afterwards that he had formerly been the public executioner and that he was always asking when there was likely to be another job for him, lamenting the fact that his curved beheading sword had too long lain idle in these degenerate days.

The *sarkin kasuwa* with one of the *dogarai* went ahead to clear the way, while the rest spread out in a semicircle on either side and behind us to keep the crowd from coming too near. The news that a white man was in the market-place spread like wild-fire and in no time at all a crowd of several hundreds surrounded and followed us, interestedly staring and chattering, and continually being added to by others throughout our tour. The foremost and boldest, of course, were numbers of small naked urchins, who kept the *dogarai* busy. These noble defenders of our sacred persons frequently pretended to charge, cracking their whips the while, whereat the enemy retreated in wild disorder shrieking with simulated terror, only to return in augmented numbers a few moments later. A white man is a *rara avis* in that part of the

world, and it is doubtful whether a white woman had ever been seen there before. It is doubtful also whether the people were aware that they were seeing one then, and in my bush-kit of shirt, shorts and helmet, all the same as D.'s, they might easily be forgiven for failing to recognise me as the female of the species.

The market was arranged methodically in long alleys with booths on either side, and occasional smaller alleys leading through from one to the next. The different trades seemed to inhabit different alleys, and we first passed through the tailors' domain where the stalls were hung with a brave display of garments. In the dim interiors of the shelters the tailors were busy at their treadle sewing machines, working away amid a marvellous clatter, while outside their henchmen watched over the stock and served the customers.

The flies, which were appalling as was only to be expected in a hot and sandy region, were naturally thickest round the butchers' shops. Several animals had been slaughtered in honour of market-day and the meat was laid out on bamboo frames in the open in a cloud of dust and flies. Some of it was cut into small pieces which were stuck one above the other on skewers in a manner reminiscent of beef olives or that delicious Russian dish *shashlyk*. The skewers were then stuck in a circle in the ground and the meat roasted at a fire which burned in the centre.

Passing by way of potters' row, the wood market and the alleys of other trades we came to the dye-pits where a number of men armed with long poles were immersing cloth in deep well-like pits from which arose an evil acrid stench; the leather-workers' quarter where bridles, whips, sandals and riding-boots were for sale and ornate saddles built on heavy wooden frames; and finally found ourselves in the grain and ground-nut market.

Here was a scene of great activity. The air was loud with the voices of men and animals; camels complaining bitterly with grunts and groans as their drivers, uttering peculiar whoops like Scots in the ecstasy of a reel, persuaded them to kneel and allow themselves to be unloaded. The merchants were busy in their shelters bargaining with the caravan owners, while outside their men hauled and heaved the sacks of produce, piling them into great mounds higher than the surrounding huts, with the usual West African vocal accompaniment to their labours.

And then we met an old friend. A tall old man appeared on the threshold of one of the booths, and the moment he caught

sight of us he hastily shuffled out of his slippers and came hurrying across. Then dropping on his knees and bowing to the ground in salutation he poured forth a string of greetings and expressions of joy. I think we were almost as pleased to see him as he was to see us, but we were not quite so demonstrative about it! He was one Sulimanu, whom we had known and liked well in another part of the country some years before. He was an impressive figure, with keen eyes, regular clean-cut features and the little Mohammedan beard beneath the chin which all good Hausa men affect. He wore a heavily embroidered white robe, red fez and white turban-cloth, and had an authoritative and aristocratic air. He told us that when his time as interpreter, which had been his profession when we had known him before, had expired, he had had a nice little nest-egg stored away, so he had gone into the grain business in his own country. But then hard times had come and having heard that there was something to be made out of ground nuts he had left his country and trekked away up here. He was now settled in the neighbourhood, prosperous and respected, and quite one of the City Fathers.

But this morning he was worried. Since daybreak he had been expecting several large caravans from a certain place whose owners always dealt solely with him, but there was no sign of them. He had sent out scouts to look for them, but they had not found them. There was another mysterious circumstance. Sulimanu's only serious rival, Audu, whose methods could not afford too close an inspection according to Sulimanu, had not appeared at the market that day. One of his headmen was deputising for him and said that his master had been called away suddenly on business the night before but would soon return. The absence of Audu from market was unprecedented, and combined with the non-appearance of the expected caravans puzzled the old merchant greatly.

'That Audu is a worthless fellow,' he said. 'I suspect that he intends to do me harm. But do not let me occupy my mind with such matters when here I see you again. Madalla! May Allah increase your greatness!'

D. uttered a fervent 'Amin!'

Near by a few of Sulimanu's camels were lying in the shade of a mango tree, one of the she-camels with a young offspring beside her. The camel is surely the ugliest beast that was ever created, yet with that appealing quality possessed by any very

young thing the baby camel was really rather sweet. Its hair was brown and fluffy, and its look of innocence was ludicrously coupled with that innate air of insolent snobbery and superciliousness which their drooping eyelids and contemptuous lower lip give to all camels. When old Sulimanu saw that I was amused by it he wanted to give it to me on the spot.

'I can spare the mother,' he said. 'And when the little one needs her no more she can be returned to me. I had meant the young one for my daughter, but since the *uwargidda* admires it I hope she will accept it. Maidaria can have the next one.'

This was a poser. What does one do when presented with a camel-calf in the middle of a three-months' trek, at the end of which one is going on leave? With unaltered expression, I hoped, I turned to D.

'What does A. do?' I murmured, earnestly wishing I had never seen the animal.

'Accept it,' said D., 'and don't worry!'

I was somewhat surprised at his calmness, but did as he advised; and Sulimanu with many 'madalla's' summoned a minion and instructed him to lead Mrs. and Miss Camel up to the rest-house forthwith. I pictured the faces of our servants when they should see this addition to our household but dared not dwell on the picture for fear that my outward gravity might desert me. I glanced at D. and saw his lips quiver, but he turned quickly and began to ask Sulimanu about the health of his family in a voice whose firmness was unshaken.

When we had last seen Maidaria she had been a slim little brown thing just promoted from the leather girdle and string of beads of babyhood to the short body-cloth of very young girlhood. Now Sulimanu told us she was shortly to be married to the headman's son, an excellent young man to whom she had been betrothed for some time. Everybody concerned seemed very pleased with the arrangement, and the marriage when it came off in a couple of months' time promised to be a very smart affair.

When the old man begged us to honour him by resting awhile in his *zaure* which he assured us was not far away, we agreed gladly, for by now the day was very hot. A *zaure* is at once the main entrance to a compound, the place in which visitors are received and lodged, and the general living-room of the family. The doorway of Sulimanu's *zaure*, a mud-walled hut with a thatch roof, opened on to the market-place, another opposite to it led to the

compound itself, and against one wall was a mud dais. The low sides of the dais itself and the wall of the hut behind it were ornamented with rough carving, and the whole thing looked like a very primitive stage complete with back-curtain. These stages are the seats of the mighty and a feature of many *zaures*. They form the bed of the visitor by night, the lounge of the head of the family by day, and the platform from which he sets the world to rights of an evening before retiring to his private hut to sleep.

A couple of rickety deck-chairs, with red leather in place of canvas, were placed upon the dais for us, and Sulimanu went to fetch his favourite wife and daughter. They were sure to be at home, for the women-folk of a well-to-do Mohammedan seldom leave his compound. Maidaria's mother was a handsome woman, not of Sulimanu's own race, but a Fulani, a people whose women are acclaimed the most beautiful in all West Africa. Her daughter, a bright-faced child of fifteen or sixteen, was well named the Laughing One, but now her expression was as grave and decorous as she could make it and her eyes modestly cast down as good manners decree, as she and her mother kneeled and bowed before us. She had the pale *café-au-lait* skin of her mother's people, and was slim and tall for her age, with a small head and delicate features. With an elegance which would be hard to beat she wore a cloth wrapped closely round her from her arm-pits nearly to her ankles and she was adorned with many bangles and bracelets of silver and brass and enamel and at least half a dozen necklaces. Some, of beads, were wound tightly round her throat row upon row, making her neck appear incredibly long and slender. And long heavy silver and enamel ear-rings of beautiful and intricate workmanship fell down below her shoulders. Her hair was elaborately dressed in the Fulani fashion, in two tight plaits which curved downward and outward on either side of the face and a wide flat outward-curving strip at the back of the head. Altogether she was a pleasing sight.

'Come to the rest-house this evening, that the *uwargidda* may give you a wedding gift for Maidaria,' said D. to Sulimanu as we rose to go after renewing our acquaintance with the women.

By now I was beginning to feel that it must be nearly lunch-time, so we rewarded the *sarkin kasuwa* and attendant satellites suitably and turned homewards. On our way we visited the horses and found them being greatly worried. Insects were swarming up their legs and biting them so viciously that they bled. Big

brutes, the size of a little finger-nail, of a rich mahogany colour, oblong, thin as paper. This was my first introduction to these domestic pets, but afterwards I was to become unpleasantly familiar with them, often finding them happily ensconced in my suit-cases or mosquito-net and on one awful occasion even upon my person. The horse-boys said that these were of a particularly large brand which preyed upon cattle and that the ground beneath all the trees was thick with them. However, we had the horses removed to another tree farther away and they did not seem to be touched there. But that may have been owing to the fact that we had their legs coated thickly with a mixture of native butter and snuff, and even a bug won't swallow that.

Towards tea-time, while we were seeking relief beneath our mosquito-nets from the flies which made the day hideous, there was a sudden tremendous uproar from the market. There was a noise like thunder and the ground seemed to shake as if at the stampede of a thousand elephants, while shouts and screams mingled with the frightened shrieks of horses to swell the din. We jumped out of bed and ran to the door. People were streaming from the market-place and rushing wildly away in all directions and it was the thudding of their running feet that we had heard. There was nothing to be seen to account for the sudden exodus. We sent a boy hotfoot to find out what it was all about, but he returned none the wiser for the men he had asked did not appear to know the reason for their flight. It seemed difficult to believe that the people did not know why they were running away, but not impossible if one were at all familiar with the wonderful ways of the West African. A panic-stricken few had probably stampeded the whole crowd. Anyhow, we knew we should hear all the news when our followers came to make their evening salutations, so we possessed our souls in patience.

After tea the usual routine began. We sat outside the *rumfa* and the horse-boys paraded with the saddlery for inspection. After that another 'king' craved an audience; the *sarkin alaro*, the headman of carriers, wanting his orders for the morrow. He was an amusing old ruffian, with the bulbous nose, wide mouth, twinkling little eyes and marvellous beery voice of the genuine low comedian. He was of a negroid type, with thick neck and receding forehead. His head was so straight at the back that if it had not been for his large ears it would have been hard to tell where neck ended and head began. And billows of fat flowed up the back

of his neck like a series of grotesque double chins. He affected a pair of once-white baggy pantaloons—we could never decide whether they were long shorts or short longs—and a sleeveless upper garment on which the trademark of the cloth was still stamped in blue across the chest. No doubt he thought that that was as good as embroidery and a lot cheaper. Although a professed Mohammedan he was addicted to native beer and sometimes rolled up for his orders with several sheets in the wind. On these occasions D. always refused to see him, but he was a source of much merriment to our boys. He certainly was funny, with his hat tilted rakishly forward over one eye, his expansive gestures, ultra-politeness and general air of geniality. That evening he was sober and D. told him to be ready with his men at six o'clock the next morning, for we were moving on.

Then the various officials came on the scene accompanied by Sulimanu and seated themselves in a semicircle on the sand. After salutations had been exchanged D. asked the cause of the afternoon's uproar and everybody began to talk at once. Sulimanu had been quite right, it turned out, about 'that' Audu. There had been dirty work at the cross-roads quite literally that day, and the rush from the market-place was one of the by-products of his villainy.

When we had appeared in the town the evening before market-day Audu, the wily old bird, had had a very bright idea. He knew perfectly well who D. was and why he was at Karangia, and that he had nothing whatever to do with public health, but that did not deter him. A great many of the people of that part of the world were at that time ignorant and backward and had all a primitive people's shyness of anything new. Although ravaged by diseases they accepted them as the will of Allah and it did not occur to them to try to do anything to better their lot, so that although smallpox was by no means uncommon in their villages during the dry season they tended to evade all attempts to vaccinate them. Knowing this Audu thought he saw his way to steal a march on his rival and bring off a *coup*. Very early that morning, long before daybreak, he had collected his men, camels, certain heavy bags and empty sacks and slipped away quietly some miles through the bush. When he came to the place where the main trek route met the path along which would come the special caravans expected by Sulimanu he sat down and chuckled in his beard, awaiting events.



Presently the first caravan hove in sight and when it came up with him Audu hailed the drivers and entered into conversation with them. In West Africa it is not considered rude to ask a complete stranger his business. Indeed, one is more likely to be considered to be lacking in courtesy and interest if one does not. So it was perfectly easy and natural for Audu to ask them if they were going to Karangia market and then to say that so was he, so they could travel on together. He asked them next if they had heard the news, that there was a white vaccinator there. Immediately they became terrified. Surely knowing this he was not going on? He said he was not afraid, he would evade the knife somehow. The drivers marvelled at his courage and said that nothing would persuade *them* to enter the town now. Yet what were they to do? They had engaged to sell their produce to Sulimanu, but they dared not go on, although they needed the money.

‘I will help you,’ said Audu. ‘I will buy your goods. See, here is money. Of course I cannot give you the full price, as I have to transport the stuff many miles to the town. But if you do not wish to go on yourselves or to take your goods back home again, here I am and I will buy.’

Never doubting his word, the people saw themselves in a cleft stick, so they took what he offered and departed to their own places, far from satisfied with the bargain, for their profit was practically nil, but congratulating themselves heartily on having escaped so providentially the dreaded knife.

All went swimmingly and by afternoon Audu’s sacks were full, though his money-bags were not empty, and he only waited for night to fall before returning secretly to town with his ill-gotten gains. He knew that he had acted unlawfully in thus intercepting the people and causing them by false pretences to sell him their goods below market prices, but he told himself it was their own fault if they were fools enough to be taken in and did not allow his conscience to trouble him. The people he had swindled had been inhabitants of a distant district and he felt quite safe. His own men were to be trusted, for he had bribed them well.

But, unnoticed by him or his men, there had been a man of Karangia travelling with one of the caravans. This man was an old soldier and had no fear of vaccinators, black or white. He rode on, quietly pondering over the story while Audu detained the caravan drivers, and it was he who was the innocent cause

of the dash from the market. When he reached the town he was hailed on all sides by his friends.

'So!' he remarked to some of them. 'You have the white man with the knife here, the vaccinator?'

'Vaccinator! Is that white man a vaccinator? Ho! So that is why he was walking all round the market this morning. Of course! He was selecting those whom he would scratch. *Kai!* Perhaps he chose me, perhaps you, Ali, or you, Dan Gogo. Hey, friends! The white man is a *vaccinator!*'

'Vaccinator!' 'Vaccinator!'

The word was taken up on every side, and in a flash panic broke out. In vain the enlightened minority had endeavoured to calm the people's fears and bring them back to the market. But no, they had had a nasty shock and would not feel really easy in their minds until they had placed many miles between them and the rest-house on the hill; for although some of them had indeed fled at first for no other reason than that all were fleeing, the news that D. was a vaccinator spread like a bush-fire and was soon common property for miles around. So the people went, with a fine blood-curdling tale to relate to their stay-at-homes.

When the ex-soldier heard that D. was not a vaccinator after all, he reported Audu's knavery to the village headman who collected a number of his friends and went off to apprehend the villain of the piece. At the same time messengers were sent all round the district to contradict the story the bad old man had set afoot. Thus ended the tale, and apparently the career, of Audu the Audacious.

We had decided on a course of action with regard to the camel, and when the officials had been dismissed D. broached the matter to Sulimanu.

'The *uvargidda* is delighted with the camel,' said D. 'It is quite the most beautiful camel she has ever seen and she has always desired to own one. But unfortunately camels will not thrive in our country and we are shortly going on leave. Therefore we are in a dilemma, but we think we see a way out of it if you will help us, Sulimanu. It breaks our hearts to suggest it, for it means that we must part with the camel.'

Here Sulimanu's face fell and I began to fear that he might be hurt. But D., the master of diplomacy, had the situation well in hand.

'Rather do we prefer to suffer from the parting,' he went on, 'than that any ill should befall the camel. Consequently we

have decided on the very best possible thing that can happen for that fortunate animal. We feel sure that you will agree with us. The *uvargidda* has named it "Lafia," and what better gift can one offer a bride than "Happiness" ?

Sulimanu's eyes lit up.

'We wish to bestow "Lafia" on Maidaria as a wedding gift and with it this silk scarf which the *uvargidda* brought from England.'

The old man's delight showed that we had indeed done the right thing, and we breathed again. And soon he was going down the hill carrying with great care the scarf, a bottle of scent for himself and a bead necklace for Maidaria's mother. Behind him our little White Elephant minced haughtily beside her august parent.

The night was cool and we sat outside before a roaring fire. All was peace. Fires twinkled here and there among the sand-hills where our carriers were encamped, and faint sounds of laughter and song came to us on an occasional breeze. Grouped round a cheerful blaze near the market-place the lads of the town under their teacher were reciting passages from the Koran with more strength of lung than understanding; and the thumping of the grain-mortars in adjacent compounds announced that their suppers would soon be ready. From our servants' quarters came a continual murmur of sound—the never-silent voice of the cook flowing ceaselessly on—and someone twanged a stringed instrument and sang softly to himself. The full moon would soon be rising and the stars were wonderfully bright. Trojan raised his head from his bundle of hay and blew contentedly through his nose, while somewhere in the landscape a panting horse-boy plodded through the sand cursing a bad black horse. We raised our glasses and smiled at each other.

'Here's "Lafia!"'

## TWO CHILDREN'S POEMS.

## I. TO A SEAGULL.

MINE but to gaze, while thou art free to fly  
 Far out beyond the limit of my sight,  
 A triple Kingdom, earth and sea and sky  
 Is thine to compass in unfettered flight.  
 On sun-kissed crag like sentinel to stand,  
 No vantage point beyond thy questing reach,  
 Soaring, to swoop and flit along the strand  
 Or fish the pools upon the rock-strewn beach.  
 Herald of Storm! skimming the crested wave,  
 Thine is the freedom of the boundless sea,  
 What mighty seaman, calm in ocean grave,  
 Has passed his dauntless spirit on to thee,  
 To bear, in storm or sunshine, witness clear  
 Of that glad freedom England holds so dear?

MONICA M. BRIDGEN,  
 (aged 15).

## II. 'CRÉCY.'

THE clash of arms, the stamp of steed,  
 The trumpet's stirring call.  
 To-day the thirsty earth shall feed  
 On the blood of those that fall.

The roll of drum, the tilt of lance,  
 The cavalry moves forth  
 To meet the proud array of France,  
 That spread to South and North.

To-day on Crécy's glorious field  
 The cannon's roar doth sound,  
 A weapon new for man to wield,  
 Now for the first time found.

Again St. George has won the day!  
 Thanks to the English bows,  
 And we have kept the French at bay—  
 So perish all our foes!

WILLIAM VAN STRAUBENZEE  
 (aged 10).

*'SHUT UP BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT.'*

BY JAMES FERGUSON.

FEW things seem quite so dead as a long-repealed Act of Parliament; and an Act which was injudicious in its begetting, unpopular in its application, and remained for only five years on the Statute Book, might fairly be considered not worth resurrecting even in a magazine article. But the story of the Shop Tax imposed during the younger Pitt's first ministry is a good example of what entertainment can be found in the by-ways of history.

It was just over 150 years ago—on May 9, 1785—that William Pitt, then only twenty-five years old, opened his first Budget. The tax which in the course of it he proposed to lay upon retail shops was one of several measures designed to raise revenue; for Great Britain was still in an impoverished state, not having yet recovered from the financial strain and commercial losses of the American war. The tax was to be levied proportionately on shop rents, and was to range from a shilling in the pound on shops whose yearly rent was between £4 and £10 to two shillings in the pound on those whose rent was £25 and upwards. Pitt estimated that this measure would produce at least £120,000 a year. By way of recompense to the retail dealers, he proposed to abolish the licences granted to hawkers and pedlars who were considered to injure the shopkeepers by their competition, besides being 'a kind of nursery for inland smuggling.' The tax, he added, 'would not cost the nation anything in collecting, as he intended it should be collected with the house-tax.'

This proposal met with a good deal of opposition, led by Fox; and the debate on it which took place on May 23 was resumed on the 26th and 30th. Among its opponents was a Scottish member, George Dempster, representing the Forfar and Fife burghs, who attacked with particular energy the clause relating to the hawkers and pedlars. Recalling the sparsely populated rural districts of his native Angus, to whose inhabitants the pedlars were of the greatest service, he reminded Pitt of the 'many persons so situated, that the shop must come to them, as it was utterly impossible for them to go to the shop.'

The general ground of opposition, however, was the assertion that the tax would be an unfair oppression on the ordinary small shopkeeper. This objection was attacked with ponderous sarcasm by one of Pitt's supporters, Sir Gregory Page Turner, M.P. for Thirsk. 'I do not conceive,' he declared, 'that it will be burdensome to the shopkeeper. It is true, it may not enable him to go out in his one-horse chaise, his phaeton, or keep his country-house; but will that prove his ruin? Are not these superfluities with which he may easily dispense?'

The House enjoyed Sir Gregory, and a majority of it did not disagree with him. Fox's eloquence did not turn the scale, and his personal followers had been enormously reduced by the landslide election of the previous year. Pitt's proposal to tax retail shops was accordingly carried by 111 votes to 73.

Pitt had probably not realised how unpopular the Shop Tax would be in every town and city in Great Britain; but he was soon wiser. The tax was not to come into force until July 5, but immediately it became law the shopkeepers of London arranged a day of general protest. It must be confessed that in public demonstrations we cannot compete in artistic effectiveness with our eighteenth-century ancestors. The streets of London on June 14, 1785, must have presented a striking spectacle. A few tradesmen who happened to be particularly dependent on members of the government opened their doors; but every other shop in London was closed, draped with black crape, and displaying a hatchment as though for a funeral. The whole city seemed to be in mourning. Among the black hangings appeared terse and sometimes witty inscriptions—'No Pitt,' 'No Shop-Tax,' 'Lighten our darkness, O Pitt,' 'Shut up by Act of Parliament,' and 'This shop to let, for particulars enquire of Mr. Pitt!' Two of the best were a poster, displayed presumably by a bookseller, which proclaimed in black-letters '*The Works of William Pitt*,' and a couplet which ran thus:

'Old Pitt raised England to the height of glory;  
Young Pitt will raise us to the attic story.'

The London mob, which, as the Gordon Riots had recently shown, could be a very serious menace when roused, expressed its sympathy with the shopkeepers. Pitt was abused and hissed as he left his carriage at the entrance of the House of Commons; and on his return to Downing Street his carriage was not only hissed and hooted but pelted with dirt and stones all the way. Three

members who were known for his supporters were similarly treated, and were forced to take shelter in a coffee-house in Parliament Street.

These doings in London were widely reported in the provincial newspapers and in Scotland also. All over the country the shopkeepers followed the example of their London brethren. Edinburgh's protests were orderly, however. The merchant company of the city held a meeting on May 28, while the Shop Tax was still before the House, and unanimously decided the measure to be 'partial and oppressive.' They took steps to instruct the Member of Parliament for their city, Sir Adam Fergusson, and the member for the county of Edinburgh, Henry Dundas, to oppose the tax. Their trouble was wasted: Dundas and Fergusson were both supporters of Pitt.

Another meeting of Edinburgh shopkeepers was held on September 6 to consider an application to Parliament for the tax's repeal, and on February 14 of the following year a still larger one, including the merchants of the Canongate and Leith, met to discuss a petition which had been drawn up. The gathering was so large that it had to meet 'in the New Church ayle.' It was announced that Sir Adam Fergusson, who had been approached by the committee of the Edinburgh shopkeepers, 'though he very politely offered to present their petition, yet he, at the same time, with his usual candour, declared he could not give it his support in the House.' The meeting thereupon tactfully decided that 'it would be paying no compliment to Sir Adam, to transmit the petition to him,' and resolved to ask William Adam, M.P. for the Elgin burghs, and nephew of Robert Adam the architect, to be their champion.

In England the Shop Tax produced much more violent protests than in Edinburgh. At Bristol, for instance, not only were shops shut and hung with mourning, but the church bells were rung, muffled, as though for a national calamity. At Norwich an effigy of Pitt was conducted through the town on horseback, attended by six executioners and hailed with yells of abuse, to be hanged and burned on Moushold Heath. But the demonstrations of the Bath shopkeepers were more picturesque than anything else outside London. The mourning draperies were diversified with weeping willows, and velvet palls were hung over the shop-counters. Poetic inscriptions were also seen, of which the most original, combining popular sentiment with a neat advertisement, was that of Miss Pit-

cairn 'at the Tapioca Shop, in the Grove,' who crossed out the first syllable of the name on her shutters and displayed underneath :

'The name of PITT's so odious grown,  
Tho' that made up one-half my own,  
That lo ! I do renounce it truly  
On this detested 5th of Ju-ly !  
And know from hence (sans hoca poca)  
That *Agnes 'Cairn* sells Tapioca.'

Pressure against the tax continued, directed in the House of Commons, as before, by Fox. He moved for leave to bring in a bill for its repeal on March 11, 1787, but his proposal was negatived after a short debate by 141 votes to 98. Sir Gregory Page Turner obliged with another speech, which 'convulsed the whole House with laughter,' but this time in opposition to the tax. "I envy you exceedingly," wrote Dempster, who had not been present, to Fergusson, 'the satisfaction of hearing Sir G. Page's oration on the shop tax. It would have overcome my gravity as well as somnolency.'

Pitt finally gave way, and the tax was repealed, on Fox's motion, in 1789. Dempster remembered the hawkers and pedlars, and followed up the repeal with a proposal to restore their licences, which was also successful. In the Budget debate of that year he declared his determination 'to oppose every tax that should be attempted to be laid on this already too-much-burthened country.'



# REPRIEVE.

BY C. C. VYVYAN.

ANDREW MACNAB sat in his cottage.

It would have been dark as the lair of any secret-living rodent, had it not been that the darkness of that kitchen was every now and then threatened, rather than illuminated, by a glow from the hearth ; and then, when the glow was brightest, a turf would fall, fulfilling that one destiny at any rate by its dissolution into soft white ash. But it would fall without a sound and immediately the shadows would close in again. Andrew, however, took no heed of darkness nor of glow, as he sat there with hands interfolded on his knees, brooding on the unpredicted month and day and hour of Sandy's death.

He and Sandy had no companion but each other now. Not that they needed any other and indeed that poor feckless woman who for many years had called herself Janet Macnab never had been anything one might call company. A pale wisht-looking creature she had always been, except in those few months of courtship when she had caught from her mistress in the Glen something that only the lady of a Laird may always have and hold. What was it then, this something ? And indeed he could not tell. Not beauty, but a way of speech and looking that made her proud and different from other lassies, something that had drawn him week after week up the Glen until——

Well, that folly was all soon over and little joy he had ever known of her, with her white face and drooping hands and feckless ways. And always that foolish talking. Why must a woman always be running on like a burn that cannot, even if it would, keep still ? Always pestering him with words and words and more words, even as she lay dying, all those many years ago. 'Andrew,' she must be saying, 'I've been a guid wife to ye, Andrew.' And then again, when his own silence ought to have taken hold of her : 'Andrew, I've been a guid wife to ye, Andrew.' But that was the last of her talking, for even while he made answer, just to bring himself ease and quiet, and said to the foolish woman 'Middling,' she gave one sigh and then there were no more questions she could put to him.

Well, he and Sandy had no companion but each other now. Not that he would call back Jamie and Gordon from across the seas, for little use had they ever been to him and little use would they be now. They had made their own bed and let them lie on it. What was it to him and Sandy if Gordon wrote from the Prairie and said they were going to sell him up unless he could get help, and the wife ailing and another bairn on the way and there was nothing left for him but to take his life unless his father—— Well, Gordon always was a hot one with words and a poor thing when it came to money. But it was Jamie, the great white-lipped, soft-handed Jamie who had spoken that thing when Maggie went her own fool's way. 'I'll never darken your doors again,' he had said, 'sin ye wullna shelter your ain daughter though she may be dying in a ditch the morrow.' After all it was good riddance of all three, they brought him nothing then and they would bring him nothing now. It was best for him and Sandy to fend for themselves alone, as they had done for many years. But now, with the hardest time of winter coming on, there were things that must be looked in the face.

Andrew Macnab shifted his position, crossed his legs and clasped both hands around one knee, crouching over the hearth; every muscle was tense as he concentrated on his problem. He began to talk aloud as if his own words would help him to resolve the question.

'It would be a shocking waste of good money, Sandy. Indeed, indeed it would not be worth the siller. If I could take it out for a quarter, or even for six months, then maybe it would be worth while for me to part with the money, but a whole lang year, it costs a deal, it does, and ye wullna last that lang, my friend.'

There was a wistful look in Sandy's golden eyes as he laid his head against his master's knee and looked up to that straggling grizzled beard and the sharp blue eyes that were overhung by shaggy brows well drawn together. He looked into the well-known face, the face that never changed for Sandy with the passing of the years, it was always just the same, but never had it meant very much to him, for always it had been the touch or smell or voice of his master that had claimed unchanging recognition and compelled unchanging love. The lean old sheep-dog placed one paw upon Andrew's knee, as if he fain would understand the words that were spoken to him, but he made no other answer to his master's speech. Andrew looked at him and put his head aside; he rose

and reached up to a beam overhead and took down an old shot-gun that was balanced on three nails ; he opened a drawer in the kitchen table, took out two cartridges and laid them beside the gun. Then, leaving Sandy curled up in front of the glowing peats, he fumbled his way upstairs in the darkness, unlatched his door and went to bed.

That night while Andrew Macnab slept he dreamed and in the dream he was feeling a weight of misery upon him. He could not understand its origin. It was not actual pain nor actual fear, but it was worse than either ; it was like a black despair welling up from within, more terrible to combat than any danger threatening from without. He was not alone, but the sense that he had companions all about him gave him no feeling of security nor warmth, for he and they alike were moving slowly forward, impelled by something that they could not see nor hear nor touch, on and on in a waste country where the very barrenness was a kind of agony. There was in him a terrible yearning that filled his whole being, but it was a yearning for he knew not what, and the slow companioned progress that he made brought no sense of hope nor sense of any near fulfilment. There was very little light and the mist that bounded them on every side held no drop of moisture. It was a dry and hostile mist and it never lifted all the time, while, sick at heart and uncertain of their purpose, he and the other shapes moved slowly forward, and ever and again there would emerge from the mist other figures to swell their company.

Now they were all still, gazing across a space that was not flowing river nor blue mist nor any known thing from the world of rock and earth and air and water ; but although it moved not, yet it seemed like a mighty flowing barrier set between them and the fairest land that ever was, a garden full of forms that moved in some light of happiness. The sad company stood there in silence, gazing across at that land of birds in sunshine, of flowers and cool fountains, where happy creatures were moving to and fro all unaware of any other thing than gladness, and as they gazed with straining eyes they were all leaning in the same direction, towards that flowing barrier, towards that happy land, leaning with arms outstretched like wind-blown trees on a heath.

Now there would be one figure from among the glad ones who would come easily across the way that flowed between the two companies, and with shining eyes would lead one of those leaning ones by the hand, and together, slowly, painfully, they would pass back across the barrier into that place of happiness. Sometimes it

would be a child who made that double journey and sometimes a grown person, and every time that one from among that sad crowd was fetched away, a sigh would pass through all the others, as when leaves of birches in the glen are stirred by wind that eddies downward from the hills.

And all the while, like some anxiety grown weightier with silence, black misery was gathered in the soul of Andrew Macnab.

No figure from among the glad ones beckoned to him and he strained his eyes in search of something, someone, that should take his sorrow from him. What was it? Who was it? He could not tell. Surely it was something lost or forgotten very long ago. He thought about his parents, but he scarcely could remember them, only he recalled that struggle for existence in a family where many children gathered hungrily around a little food. He thought about his wife and how the love of their brief courtship had shrivelled and died between them in a little space of time. Then he thought of his two sons and of his only daughter, out in the world with never a touch of kinship passing now between himself and them. There was an aching loneliness within him, as if he had awakened from some comfortable dream only to find emptiness within and emptiness without, with all known landmarks vanished. There was something he had missed, lost, or forgotten, very long ago. There was something he must search for now. In an anguish of mind that grew deeper every moment he peered across the barrier.

Now that anguish had become something even harder to be borne. An overmastering excitement and anxiety took hold of him, he was weak as water and trembling like a new-born lamb. What was that familiar form discerned across the barrier, coming out from among the glad ones, coming, surely, towards himself? Could it be? Oh, if only it were true! Nearer and nearer now. Yes, there could be no mistaking that shaggy head, there was Sandy making towards him, there was Sandy coming just as if his master had whistled to him. Andrew found himself panting heavily. 'Sandy my dog!' he cried in his heart, 'are ye coming over?'

The dog was coming over. The traverse of that way was easy enough for him and now his golden eyes were looking up into the face of his master. He landed on the shore and with love and trust in his eyes put up one paw and rubbed himself against his master's leg. Andrew with a smothered cry grasped the rough thick hair on Sandy's neck, and the dog, without lingering a moment,

turned round to begin the backward journey. Slow and difficult it was, but Sandy pulled and strained with all his strength while Andrew held firmly to him, until together they landed on the other shore. A strange annihilating feeling welled up in Andrew's heart, a wave of love and gratitude. 'Sandy!' he cried, 'my dog, my ain dog!'

Andrew Macnab awoke with a queer sensation in his eyes. He put up one hand to his face and found that there were tears upon his cheeks. It was pitch dark and very cold in the little bedroom. He lit a candle and dressed himself and stumbled down the stairs. He blew up the peats until there was a smouldering glow and then he set the porridge on the fire to warm.

'Ye'll be needing a good feed this morn,' he said to Sandy, 'we've a lang way to gang.'

After the two had fed, Andrew wrapped his plaid about him and put his bonnet on his head and took a stout stick from behind the kitchen door; then he set out, with Sandy following close behind him, locked the door of the cottage and hid the key beneath a flat stone in a tuft of heather some twenty yards away.

Snow was falling and a bitter wind blew from the north. Andrew set his face toward the Glen and the pass that led between the hills, and all the way he kept his head down, facing into the wind, and all the way Sandy was close beside his heels. Mile after mile they trudged on in silence; the snowflakes whirled about them but in falling made no sound; each step of man and dog with soft but noiseless pressure left darkened bruises on the snow; now and then some shepherd would loom up into their little space of vision, like a ship in fog, disappearing quietly, but Andrew gave no greeting and the other steps were always muffled like his own.

After ten miles' walking, they came to the small town and Andrew made for the Post Office. He entered, shaking the snow from his plaid, and spoke curtly to the young woman behind the counter.

'I want a licence for a dog,' he said.

## HARTLEY.

BY IRIS ORIGO.

A LITTLE boy, lying in bed one night in the year 1802, was feeling unhappy. He called for a candle—the *seems*, he said, were making him miserable. ‘What do you mean, my love?’ ‘The seems, the seems. What seems to be and is not, men and faces, and I do not know what—ugly and sometimes pretty, and those turn ugly, and they seem when my eyes are open, and worse when they are shut—and the candle cures the *seems*.’ The little boy was the eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge—and in his puzzled efforts to distinguish between imagination and reality, he was already dutifully treading in his father’s footsteps. His first doubts as to the reality, the permanence, of the visible world had seized him a few months earlier, when he was only five years old. Looking out of the study window, across the Keswick valley—so Coleridge tells us with satisfaction—Hartley ‘fixed his eyes steadily and for some time on the opposite prospect and said, “Will yon mountains *always* be?”’ But his father offered him no reassurance. No, he ‘showed him the whole magnificent prospect in a looking-glass, and held it up, so that the whole was like a canopy or ceiling over his head,’ while the poor child ‘struggled to express himself concerning the difference between the thing and the image, almost with convulsive effort.’ ‘I never saw before,’ comments his father, ‘such an abstract of thinking as a pure act of energy—of thinking as distinguished from thought.’

Poor bewildered little Hartley! to be a poet’s child—to be the child of Coleridge—that must surely have been a confusing, a strange, an exciting introduction to life! It must have made childhood very different from most other childhoods. ‘Hartley fell down and hurt himself—I caught him up crying and screaming and ran out of doors with him. The Moon caught his eye—he ceased crying immediately—and his eyes and the tears in them, how they glittered in the moonlight!’ How odd, how agreeable, to have a father whose thoughts turned naturally to moonshine rather than to liniments as a cure for the pain of a bruise! And then, on growing up, how amusing, how flattering to find the

unshed tears of one's childhood glittering once more in the Ancient Mariner's eye!

But if Hartley, from his earliest babyhood, was the plaything of Coleridge's poetic fancies, he was also from the first the object of a serious—we might indeed say a solemn—paternal solicitude. On receiving the news of the baby's birth the poet, according to his own account, retired to his room to address himself to his Maker, but on finding that he could only 'offer up to Him the silence of stupefied feelings,' he hurried home—writing a sonnet on the way—and there 'scanned that face of feeble infancy' for 'all I had been, and all my child might be!' 'When I first saw the child,' he told Poole, with disarming frankness, 'I did not feel that thrill and overflowing of affection which I expected. I looked on it with a melancholy gaze; my mind was intensely contemplative and my heart only sad. But when two hours after I saw it at the bosom of its mother, on her arm, and her eye tearful and watching its little features, then I was thrilled and melted, and gave it the Kiss of a *father* . . .' The boy was named David Hartley, after the philosopher to whom Coleridge owed many of his deepest convictions. 'I hope that ere he be a man,' he wrote, 'if God destines him for continuance in this life, his head will be convinced of, and his heart saturated with, the truths so ably supported by that great master of *Christian* philosophy.'

Hartley's birth was soon followed by that of another boy, who was also duly named after a philosopher, Berkeley, but this second child only lived a few weeks, and when the news of its death reached Coleridge in Germany, it was to Hartley, rather than to his dead baby, that he turned his thoughts. The baby of fourteen weeks had not yet found a place in his heart. He did indeed repeat to himself the words: 'But Death—the death of an infant—of one's own infant!'—but they awakened no feeling in him, only abstract reflections on the nature of consciousness and immortality. And forthwith he writes to Thomas Poole about 'This strange, strange scene-shifter Death!—that giddies one with insecurity. . . . But,' he adds, 'I cannot truly say that I grieve. I am perplexed—I am sad—and a little thing—a very trifle—would make me weep—but for the death of the baby I have *not* wept!' His thoughts centred upon his surviving child, Hartley; he was haunted by a thousand tormenting fantasies; he saw the same fate overtaking Hartley too. 'Dear lamb!' he wrote to Poole, 'I hope he won't be dead before I get home. There are

moments in which I have such a power of life within me, such a *concert* of it, I mean, that I lay the blame of my child's death to my absence. *Not intellectually*; but I have a strange sort of sensation as if, while I was present, none could die whom I entirely loved, and doubtless it was no absurd idea of yours that there may be unions and connections out of the visible world. . . . My dear Poole,' he added, 'don't let little Hartley die before I come home. That's silly—true—and I burst into tears as I wrote it.'

Hartley, as we know, did not die. He lived to inherit Coleridge's looks, his inward imagination, his indolence, his melancholy—almost every quality of his father's, in fact, excepting his genius—and it was for this child, his first-born, that Coleridge reserved the fullness of his love. In the little cottage at Nether Stowey, when Hartley was still in his cradle, a visitor describes the poet 'hanging over his infant and talking to it, fancying what it will be in future days,' and on winter nights, sitting alone by the cottage fire, Coleridge would remember his own schooldays 'in the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,' and prophesy for his son a happier future.

'But thou, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze  
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags  
Of ancient mountains, and beneath the clouds . . .'

The cottage was small and simple,—'three rooms below, and three above, all small'—and it was also servantless, so that Coleridge sometimes found himself obliged to undertake a nursemaid's duties.<sup>1</sup> 'You would smile,' he wrote to Thelwall, 'to see my eye rolling up to the ceiling in a lyric fancy, and on my knees a diaper pinned to warm.' But Coleridge's paternal tenderness survived even this test. 'My little David Hartley grows a sweet boy,' he wrote, 'and has high health; he laughs at us till he makes us weep for very fondness.' Even the most prosaic functions of infancy were transformed in Papa's imagination. 'David Hartley is well, saving that he is sometimes inspired by the God Aeolus, and like Isaiah, "his bowels sound like an harp."' In the following spring another baby was born and was named Derwent, after the river which flowed before the house. 'A sweet, lovely little Fatty,' Dorothy Wordsworth called him—but Southey, comparing him

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Coleridge, according to Dorothy Wordsworth, was 'a sad fiddle-faddler. From about half-past ten on Sunday morning until two, she did nothing but wash and dress her two children and herself, and was just ready for dinner.'



with his brother, remarked that 'all Hartley's guts are in his brains, and all Derwent's brains are in his guts.' 'From earliest infancy,' noted their father, 'Hartley was absent, a mere dreamer at his meals, put the food into his mouth by one effort, and made a second effort to remember it was there and swallow it. With little Derwent it is a time of rapture and jubilee, and any tale that has not *pie* or *cake* in it comes very flat to him.'

No aspect of the children's infancy, no game invented by them, was unworthy of the poet's attention. Watching them at their play, he would draw out his notebook and solemnly add one more to his *List of Subjects to do with Infants and Infancy*, or, writing to his friends, would depict a series of vivid, tender 'Kinderszenen.' 'Children in the wind—hair floating, tossing, a miniature of the agitated trees below which they played. The elder whirling for joy, the one in petticoats, a fat baby eddying half-willingly, half by the force of the gust, driven backward, struggling forward—both drunk with a pleasure, both shouting their hymn of joy.' His letters abound in such charming pictures. 'Little Hartley is a spirit that dances on an aspen-leaf . . . the darling of the sun and breeze.' And from these fleeting impressions poetry was distilled.

'A little child, a limber elf  
Singing, dancing to itself;  
A faery thing with red round cheeks  
That always *finds* and never *seeks*. . . '

For as Hartley grew older Coleridge began to find in his son a reflection of his own dreams, an eager, delighted response to his own fantasies. Before the child had yet reached his second birthday, Coleridge was writing to Sara, urging her to teach him to read, and to prepare herself for this task by studying Edgeworth's *Essay on Education*. By the time that he was three, his resemblance to his father was already perceptible. 'My talkativeness is his,' Coleridge notes, 'without diminishing on my side. . . To-morrow Sara and I dine at Mr. Gobwin's, as Hartley calls him, who gave the philosopher such a rap on the shins with a ninepin that Gobwin in huge pain lectured Sara on his boisterousness.' The poet comments that his son is indeed 'somewhat too rough and noisy' but adds that 'the cadaverous silence of Godwin's children is to me quite catacombish.' A few months later, when Hartley is four, his father—with only half-conscious humour—describes a childish remark about the stars as dead lamps in the sky as a 'theologico-

astronomical hypothesis,' and is certain that the boy is 'a very extraordinary creature, and if he lives will, I doubt not, prove a great genius.' He carries the child out in his arms on a moonlit December night, and shares with him his delight in the lake, the vale, and the snow-clad mountains; 'Hartley was in my arms the other evening, looking at the sky; he saw the moon glide into a large cloud. Shortly after, at another part of the cloud, several stars sailed in. Says he, "Pretty creatures! they are going in to see after their mother moon."' And in the same year Coleridge writes to Godwin: 'I look at my doted-on Hartley—he moves—he lives—he finds impulses from within and from without, he is the darling of the sun and breeze. Nature seems to bless him as a thing her own. He looks at the clouds, the mountains, the living beings of the earth, and vaults and jubilates!'

So Coleridge delighted in his son. And little Hartley—what did he feel in the company of his disconcerting, charming, incalculable Papa—this grown-up man who still, as Hazlitt says, 'contrived to prefer the unknown to the known,' the fabulous to the familiar. 'My whole being,' Coleridge had written of his own boyhood, 'was, with eyes closed to every object of present sense, to crumple myself up in a sunny corner, and read, read, read;<sup>1</sup> fixing myself on Robinson Crusoe's island, finding a mountain of plum-cake and eating a room for myself, and then eating it into the shapes of tables and chairs.' A father who remembered the joys of his childhood so vividly would not deny to his children the enjoyment of similar delights. 'Should children be permitted to read romances,' he wrote, 'and relations of giants and magicians and genii? I know all that has been said against it; but I have formed my faith in the affirmative. I know no other way of giving the mind a love of the Great and the Whole. Those who have reached the same truths step by step, through the constant testimony of their senses, seem to me to want a sense which I possess. They contemplate nothing but *parts*, and all *parts* are necessarily little. And the universe to them is but a mass of *little things*.'

<sup>1</sup> One of the stories that he read, *The Astonishing Tale of Tom Hickathrift*, must have been remarkable indeed, for we have Coleridge's testimony that 'among the θαύματα θαυμαστότερα of the present age' he could not recollect 'a more astonishing image than that of "the whole rookery that flew out of the giant's beard, scared by the challenge of the heroic Tom Hickathrift!"' And in paying this tribute to Tom Hickathrift, Coleridge pays an unwitting tribute to the powers of his own imagination, for, strange as it may seem, there is no version of *Tom Hickathrift* in which mention of the giant's rookery is to be found!

So with round, wondering eyes, meeting giants, magicians and genii, little Hartley, at an exceedingly tender age, was introduced to the Great and the Whole. A fresh supply of fairy-stories was sent to his nursery by his father's friend, Charles Lamb, together with a characteristically violent outburst on discovering that *Goody Two-Shoes* was almost out of print. 'Mrs. Barbauld's stuff has banished all the old classics of the nursery. . . . Knowledge insignificant and vapid as Mrs. Barbauld's books convey, it seems, must come to a child in the *shape of knowledge*, and his empty noddle must be turned with conceit of his own powers when he has learnt that a Horse is an animal, and Billy is better than a Horse, and such like; instead of that beautiful Interest in wild tales which made the child a man, while all the time he suspected himself to be no bigger than a child. . . . Damn them! I mean the cursed Barbauld Crew, those Blights and Blasts of all that is Human in man and child.'

But we have left little Hartley far behind—a fate that must have overtaken him often enough in those years when, breathless and amazed, but still fascinated and enthralled, he was struggling to keep up with the onrush of his father's eloquent fantasies. There is a portrait of him at the age of ten—showing a round head, round pouting mouth, round enquiring eyes. That wistful, bewildered, slightly anxious little countenance was 'as handsome as a face so original and intellectual can be' in his father's eyes, 'a poet, in spite of the forehead, "villainously low," which his mother smuggled into his face.' And in this opinion Dorothy Wordsworth lends Coleridge some support, for to her the boy seemed to have 'so much thought and feeling in his face that it is scarcely possible to look on him with indifference.'

But to Coleridge—who knew better than anyone the dangers of his own character—his son's increasing resemblance to himself was a source of anxiety, as well as of satisfaction. The 'want of reliability in little things,' the procrastination, the moodiness, which he knew so well in himself, which his wife had so often condemned—he saw them all reflected in Hartley's ingenuous countenance. Taking up his pen, he addressed to his son—who was not yet eleven years old—a letter so characteristic in its mixture of severity and indulgence, of understanding and pomposity, that it is irresistible to quote a large part of it.

'In all human beings,' it begins, 'good and bad qualities are not only found together, side by side, as it were, but they actually

tend to produce each other ; at least they must be considered as twins of a common parent, and the amiable propensities too often sustain and foster their unhandsome sisters.' At this point, we may imagine, poor Hartley must have begun to feel a little anxious ; but a number of flowing, moralizing sentences had yet to be read before the point was reached. ' Nothing that gives you pain dwells long enough upon your mind to do you any good, just as in some diseases the medicines pass so quickly through the stomach and bowels as to be able to exert none of their healing qualities. In like manner, this power which you possess of shoving aside all disagreeable reflections, or losing them in a labyrinth of day-dreams, which saves you from some present pain, has, on the other hand, interwoven with your nature habits of procrastination, which, unless you correct them in time . . . must lead you into lasting unhappiness.'

All this is very painful. And where is it leading ? ' You are now going with me (if God have not ordered it otherwise) into Devonshire to visit your Uncle G. Coleridge. He is a very good man and very kind ; but his notions of right and of propriety are very strict.' How can Hartley avoid offending them ?

' First then, I conjure you never to do anything of any kind when out of sight which you would not do in my presence. What is a frail and faulty father on earth compared with God, your heavenly Father ? But God is always present.' These sentences have a familiar ring, but the next one is more unexpected. ' Specially, never pick at or snatch up anything, eatable or not. I know it is only an idle, foolish trick ; but your Ottery relations would consider you as a little thief. . . . And besides, it is a dirty trick ; and people of weak stomachs would turn sick at a dish which a young *filthpaw* had been fingering.' The ' young filthpaw ' is somehow reassuring ; Hartley must have felt himself back on safe, familiar ground.

In the new paragraph, however, there is a return to the highest moral altitudes ; honesty is recommended, strict adherence to truth, no procrastination (we must remember that the reader is ten years old), no self-delusion. But again a refreshing drop occurs. ' Among the lesser faults I beg you to endeavour to remember not to stand between the half-opened door, either when you are speaking, or spoken to.' And, to wind up, if the child achieves success in all this, what then ? ' You will be,' Coleridge says, ' at peace with yourself, and a double blessing to me, who am, my dear, my

very dear Hartley, most anxiously, your fond father.' A comforting ending, after all—and then there is a postscript: 'I have not spoken about your mad passions and frantic looks, pout-mouthing; because I trust that is all over.'

But alas, with this long letter of advice Hartley's happiest years with his father had also come to an end, for Coleridge—who was then entering upon his last and most serious phase of opium-taking—had come to feel that life with Sara was no longer endurable. His letters expressed his determination to leave her, and she, Dorothy Wordsworth tells us, agreed, on condition of her being allowed to have Hartley and Derwent with her for their holidays. 'I say she has agreed to the separation,' Dorothy adds, 'but he tells us that she breaks out into outrageous passions.' Such scenes must have caused great suffering to a sensitive, observant child, and it must almost have been a relief when, at last, the final separation of his parents did take place, and Hartley and his brother were sent to the school of the Reverend John Dawes, at Ambleside. There, according to their mother, they were instructed in Greek and Latin, and were considered to have 'extraordinary abilities,' while at week-ends and holidays they visited their father at Grasmere.

Coleridge was now in a miserable condition of despondency, and it was only a few months later that his famous quarrel with the Wordsworths took place. He moved to the Morgans' house at Hammersmith, and for many months no news was heard of him. 'It would pity anybody's heart to look at Hartley,' wrote Dorothy, 'when he enquires (as if hopelessly) whether there is any news of his father.' Soon the quarrel could no longer be kept a secret, for Coleridge, on picking up the boys at school to take them to Keswick, passed through Grasmere without stopping there even for a moment. 'Poor Hartley,' wrote Mrs. Coleridge to Poole, 'sat in speechless astonishment as the Chaise passed the turning to the Vicarage where Wordsworth lives, but he dared not hazard one remark and Derwent fixed his eyes full of tears upon his father, who turned his head away to conceal his own emotions.' Soon after, when their father visited the boys at school, Derwent, according to Coleridge's own account, 'came dancing in for joy,' but Hartley 'turned pale and trembled all over;—then after he had taken some cold water, instantly asked me some questions about the connection of the Greek with the Latin, which latter he has just begun to learn.'

But Hartley still remained his father's favourite. 'I read to

Hartley out of the German a series of very masterly arguments concerning the startling gross improbabilities of "Esther" (fourteen improbabilities are stated). It really *surprised* me, the acuteness and steadiness of judgment with which he answered more than half, weakened many, and at last determined that two only were not to be got over.' Later, on comparing Hartley's answers with Eichorn's solutions, 'the coincidences were surprising.'

Now, at the age of fourteen, Hartley had not only Coleridge's turn of mind but also, according to Sara, 'a great deal of his father's manner, so that Dr. Bell . . . was much amused when he first saw him, and said, he was sure he was a Genius by the manner of opening his Mouth.' And now his schoolmaster too began to lament 'his procrastinating ways, and habit of doing *anything* rather than the *right* thing, at the *right* time, too much in this respect like a near relation of his, who sees this likeness, and bitterly laments it.' Deeper and deeper the boy wandered into the 'labyrinth of day-dreams,' in which his father had found 'many a fabled incense-tree'—but which for him was merely a maze without an issue. 'One thing I have warned him against,' wrote poor conventional Mrs. Coleridge, seeing all her husband's most trying oddities repeating themselves in her son, 'that of flying about in the open air, and uttering his poetic fancies aloud; this he constantly does when the fit is on him, whether it rain or shine, whether it be dark or light, and when we are sitting in the Parlour with the curtains drawn, between the whistling of the wind, we hear him whizzing by.' . . .

As the years pass the accounts of him become more and more depressing. With considerable difficulty he was sent to Merton, and there competed for the Newdigate, but—to his mother's annoyance—declared that his victorious rival's poem was far better than his own. 'He has no self-love to mislead him; but alas, poor youth, never was a more excentric creature ever walked the earth.' At the end of his second year a more serious blow fell: he was sent down for drunkenness. For a while he secured a post as a teacher at his own old school at Ambleside, where the young ladies of the neighbourhood nicknamed him the Black Dwarf. According to Dorothy Wordsworth, he was 'exactly like a Portuguese Jew . . . the oddest looking creature you ever saw—not taller than Mr. de Quincey—with a beard as black as a raven.' Some years later Dorothy describes 'Hartley's hopeless state,' saying that he 'goes on as usual—leaves his comfortable home once

in three months, wandering about no one knows where—sleeping in barns.’ His mother too writes of him as ‘always promising’ (Derwent, she adds, is *performing*) and adds, on his twenty-third birthday; ‘I think he is as excentric as his father to the full. May he be happier!’

Her wish, clearly uttered with little hope, was not fulfilled. The poems which her son wrote in later life are pervaded by a note of melancholy regret, of longing for the days of childhood,

‘When every thought is quaintly crisp’d and curl’d,  
Like fragrant hyacinth with dew impearl’d.’

He feels himself drifting ‘through puzzling light and perilous dark,’ a purposeless exile, a solitary wanderer.

‘Long time a child, and still a child, when years  
Had painted manhood on my cheek, was I.’

His sister, he writes, has become ‘a matron grave and sage’: his brother

‘A pastor meet  
To guide, instruct, reprove a sinful age.’

He alone—conscious of being unable to live up to expectations, of having inherited oddity without genius, of having changed from ‘a faery thing with red round cheeks,’ into the swarthy likeness of ‘a Portuguese Jew’—still roams in solitude over the moors, lost in his ‘labyrinth of day-dreams.’ His father’s prophecy has come true; he wanders

‘like a breeze  
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags  
Of ancient mountains, and beneath the clouds.’

His sudden strange appearances in wayside inns or churches become a legend in the Lake-country; his essays and poems (uneven, melancholy, but containing a few lovely lines) earn him a certain mild reputation; but fortune and happiness alike pass him by.

‘Nor child, nor man,  
Nor youth, nor sage, I find my head is grey,  
For I have lost the race I never ran;  
A rathe December blights my lagging May;  
And still I am a child, tho’ I be old;  
Time is my debtor for my years untold.’

*Siena*

*A PHILOSOPHER ON BOARD.*

BY E. M. ALMEDINGEN.

I HAD boarded that small Polish boat with a stack of new novels in my luggage. I landed in England and those novels were not as much as glanced at, and all because of that little, wiry man, who carried a dictionary instead of a steward's napkin under his arm.

He was undersized and thin, his hair suggested dust with the pale Northern sun falling on it, his skin must have successfully resisted the repeated onslaughts of tropical suns and remained pale. His small grey eyes had such a quality of imperturbability in them that I wondered if an earthquake would have made much difference to their expression. For the rest, he was a good steward. No fault could have been found with him, and I was successful in plumbing below the surface of non-committal remarks and quietly performed service only because I happened to be the sole passenger on board. The captain honoured me with his presence at dinner. The other meals I took in solitude, the steward's company excepted. Something he said in reply to a casual remark of mine opened a conversational floodgate with an almost astonishing ease.

Some obscure place in Lithuania gave him birth, so he said, but Lithuania could not really have bred him, since his was a type which naturally and happily accepts the whole world for his home and lives accordingly. To follow his own story, the dense pine woods of his nature land had early made him feel a prisoner, so he decided to escape from them, and did so—at the age of ten or thereabouts. There followed a rather confused narrative of a journey made partly on foot and partly in horse-carts of friendly peasants going south-west. He had earlier heard the name of Hamburg, and he meant to get there no matter what it cost him. He did get there by ways and means which suggested a pattern familiar to mediæval adventurers. 'Why Hamburg?' I broke in at this stage, thinking that either Riga or Reval might have answered his purpose equally well, but he shook his head.

Hamburg must have occupied some secret corner in his boyhood's earliest dreams. 'Sea, big ships, many ships at Hamburg,' I heard him stumble over the words and wondered if there could



be a streak of true Norse blood in him, its record lost in the winding avenue of his peasant ancestry, bred in the forests of Lithuania. He said he had early wanted to get to sea because 'it say so much. Trees speak, Madam, but I had no ears for trees. They disturb, they make, what say you—havoc, but the sea, it make great peace.'

His English was rather bewildering, but the numberless gaps in his vocabulary were more than explained by the wealth of his gestures and the occasional fierceness in his grey eyes.

'The sea make great peace'—but it appeared that Hamburg had not given a shred of that peace to a curious and eager youngster with no roots of his own in the great feverish port and nothing to recommend him except a crudely articulate yearning to get to sea. It was six long years before his feet were allowed to tread a deck. Six wildly chequered years these must have been, crammed with just as widely varied occupations. These he enumerated to me, 'many I remember, many I forget.'

There were months, spent in a back room of a pork-butcher's shop, where he found himself initiated into the unsavoury mysteries of sausage-making. There were many months, lived in the soapy atmosphere of a scullery of a decidedly questionable eating-house. 'No washing, Madam. Cold water, little water, then dirty towel, then dish clean. I, little boy, Madam, they say dish clean, I think it dirty and I say it dirty. So they swear and kick. I cry every night.' Life, spent among suds and dishcloths, came to an end, probably, because of his repeated protests against the accepted standards of cleanliness. Then came a vague period of just minding people's dogs, horses, parcels, learning German and Swedish, running occasional errands for the sake of direly needed coppers, and a somewhat longer stage of washing bottles in a big brewery where his wages were such that cheese on his bread was a great and rare luxury, and where his coat—or what there was of it—was nothing more than 'patch front, patch back, all patch.'

All the same, that incredibly grey pattern had its own thread of gold. There were his free hours which he translated into terms of eagerly repeated excursions to the ever-enchanted world of the docks, where one indifferent skipper after another measured his tiny, underfed body with one scathingly contemptuous glance and then sent him away with no other comfort than a sneer—'You—on board this boat? What for? This blank ship is no blank nursery. Run home to your mother, lad, and tell her to put another patch on your clothes. The first gale would blow you to pieces.'

He heard them and he went his way. He had no home; the apology of that damp and rat-ridden attic in a backwater of Hamburg could never have been a home to him. He could not even remember his mother. He was a queer little alien in the big city, but each time he left the docks, his courage must have burned as high as ever. 'The sea, it make great peace. It make clean'; his soul must have been immeasurably bigger than his body, and his soul must have been on fire with his only ambition. He meant to see it carried out, and the sneers and oaths of numberless skippers were but so much oil poured on the flames of his secret desire.

He had it at last and said good-bye to the wearying task of washing bottles for an employer who thought that beer was the crowning glory of creation.

A none-too-sober Danish skipper must have got tired of his impertunity and given him what looked a doubtful chance. He found himself engaged on lesser wages than were his at the brewery; 'man of all work,' he told me proudly enough.

He was then a puny stripling of fifteen. The work, as such, carried few thrills. The boat must have been dirty, 'filthy above words, Madam'; he raised his hands in a telling gesture. She had a cargo of salt fish and oil and was manned by a crew by comparison with whom the roughest rough in a Hamburg backwater might have suggested an angel from heaven. It did not matter to the boy from Lithuania. His small grey eyes went almost starry for a second. For the first time he lived in a world with his beloved sea all around him. The boat went to Danzig, then on to Riga and Helsingfors, and he learned something about the Baltic and the Gulf of Finland with their uncertainly coloured moods and the bitter vengeance of their winds, but it was the sea he had loved so inarticulately, and, as I listened to the somewhat confused narrative, it seemed to me as though, in between the coarse oaths of the crew, he had begun learning to pick out details of sunnier, warmer lands, of seas, shot through and through with colour so rich and so incredible that it made you 'fish-dumb,' of delicate white temples in wildly remote lands, of the cruel play of the sharks and the unspeakable glory of tropical sunsets. Scrubbing, cleaning, washing and scrubbing again, the lad from Lithuania seems to have nursed dreams about a tropical sunset and a storm in the Pacific.

The boat stayed about a week in Helsingfors, but he took no notice of his leave ashore and stubbornly remained on board. 'The

others, they laugh, they tell I a fool. I no fool. Land teach me little, sea teach much. Yes, even sea in harbour.'

On the return voyage they stopped at Hamburg, and a fit of panic came on him. Convinced that he would be sent away, he hid himself in the hold. To him Hamburg had served its purpose, and he had no wish to tramp again its cobbled streets. The boat left for Rotterdam, and he was still on board. But at Rotterdam the Dane paid him his wages and told him to be off. He had worked hard but not quite hard enough. 'Were you broken-hearted?' I asked curiously, and he shrugged his thin shoulders. 'Sea, I see it, I happy there. Sea, it never allow you, what say you—not let you down. Never.'

And the sea accepted her lover's allegiance at the end. By something like a miracle he heard of a vacancy on board a small German merchantman bound for the Far East. He rushed in with his eager application which was at once and most scornfully rejected. He had no references, and his slender experience in the Baltic was rudely disbelieved. Did he stay on at Rotterdam? Of course not. 'I stow-away one night, one day. In hold. Much water, little food. But no boy taken. Second day I come up, skipper very angry, but I say no boy, I here, I work hard, one bird in the hand better than two in the tree. Skipper, he laugh like mad, he take me. Little money, much work. I work all day and most night. Much wind and storm in the Biscay. I never sick, I always work. Skipper, he like me, he friendly. I very happy. Sea, it like me much.'

This time he had his references when he left the German, I think, in Ceylon. He was now looking for a better chance and decided not to go farther East on the same wages. 'I no think of money, but the German, he work me very hard. He friendly, but no nice man. I quiet. But I leave.' He got his second chance on board a Dutchman and nearly lost his life in the Chinese seas. His thin face puckered up into a grimace at the memory. It must have been an episode which taxed his love for the sea to the utmost.

'Skipper, he always drunk, always a bottle on bridge. He say no wind, engines full ahead, pilot, he laugh like foolishness, and wind, he tear clothes away your back. I much afraid then. Skipper, he do nothing and pilot, he do less. Men, some drunken, some lazy, no work. I afraid. And then nothing. Peace. I say there is peace in sea. No wind, no peace. Much wind, much

peace but after. You fear, you wait, you wait long, but peace, it come always.'

He had seen the East and then signed on for the return voyage to Europe. He seemed always to have stewarded small, unimportant boats, half-passenger, half-cargo. Cautiously enough, I asked him whether he had no other ambitions. How old was he? Forty-one? Why, of course, he could go on forging ahead and making his way. He was a good steward, wasn't he? There were, surely, bigger chances to be snatched, stewardship on board big liners was a profitable business. I went on talking on these lines and he heard me out patiently. Then he put down his precious Anglo-Polish dictionary and took away the remains of the dessert. The coffee served, he answered me with great precision:

Oh yes, he knew he could get a better job if he wanted to. But he was not sure if he did. From his boyhood he had never wanted mere money out of life, but just life itself. There was a difference, so he thought. When he was a lad, he had wanted to get to know the whole world, to prove that it was a good place to live in. His life in Hamburg had been hard and also 'all on one side, other side closed. I wanted all sides, all people, countries, world.' And now he knew that, whatever other people might think or say, the world was a good place to be born into. 'You know this, you say no thing. You have no word in no language, you know, it is enough.'

He had sailed across the world and round it more times than he could remember. As he talked about it, I felt that some time or other he must have seen sunsets which made him glad that he was alive and storms which must have made him remember prayers once learnt in the heart of his native forests and forgotten long since. He had seen the Taj Mahal and afterwards spent an hour in his little cubby-hole. 'All tears, so much beauty, no words for it, only heart to feel, eyes to see.' And he had met many people, some good, others bad, but all, as he thought, were alive. He added shrewdly:

'Much money, much drink and food, and no peace in life. Little money, much work, much thought, and peace. You can place your hands on it. Only this is a figure what say you? Peace not touched with hands. Peace like a cloud above and within. Much thinking—peace always come. In life this is best, how say you—than more money. I buy a green parrot in Algiers. Pretty, good, clever parrot. I buy him with money. He much pleasure

to me. But he sick and die, money, it lost. No money for peace. It come, it never die, it stay.'

His words suggested a mind stocked with much more than mere visual impressions he may have gathered on his many voyages. Had he read books? Oh no, he shook his head, he had no time for reading. He used his six dictionaries, but he had not read much else. When he had a bit of leisure, he liked to spend it in thinking, mostly of peace, it appeared, and, sometimes, when ashore, he liked to go to a concert, which, to him, must have been the same thing as his own inarticulate thoughts about peace.

At last, I ventured greatly and asked him :

'Is the sea all you had once thought it would be?'

He paused before answering, and I began wondering if any words in any earthly language would be enough for him to reply to my question. Depths of something more than gratitude lay in his grey eyes, and, involuntarily, I thought of a lover being asked a sorrowfully futile question about his beloved.

But the little man's voice rang very quietly as if he and I were talking about ordinary things. He might have been asking me whether I wanted my eggs poached or scrambled for next morning's breakfast for all the excitement in his voice. Yet, as I heard him, I understood much more than his coloured and detailed narrative had told me. As I listened to that unemotional voice, I understood what had once made him, an unproven ignorant boy of ten, turn his back on his native hamlet and look for adventure in a big seaport. Had his mother been alive at that time, he would have gone just the same. For to him the sea was more than his tongue could utter, and, in that brief moment, at least, his face reflected something one could not easily forget. Richard of Hampole might have looked like that after he had glimpsed the first turret of the heavenly City in one of his visions.

'Sea—more?' the little man from Lithuania said very slowly, as though each word was a hard effort and he wondered if he could ever really master it, 'Sea much more. When you live sea-life you know you stand before great mirror. Ugly thing is more ugly in mirror. You try and make life not so ugly. When you live sea-life, you very, very small, and God big then and life clean.'

## 'BLACK TOM.'

BY OLIVER WARNER.

## I.

'VALOUR and sufferance' are, according to the first Duke of Albemarle, the better parts of a soldier. If honour be added, the qualities are those of Thomas Fairfax, the Parliamentary General in the English Civil Wars. Posterity, in its leisurely scrutiny, acquits him of all evil; and if it has added nothing to his stature, that was high before. In him were blended the virtues of the old order he helped to overthrow, and the new forces of democracy which he led to victory. He moved so far as he felt his conscience called him, and no further. His chivalry was above reproach; he knew neither ambition nor jealousy, and, as a soldier, his name is secure.

With all this, he was overshadowed, first by Cromwell, then by Albemarle,<sup>1</sup> a fate which concerned him little in life, and will scarcely have troubled his eternal rest. He made but small clamour in the history of his time, though his actions spoke bravely; and as he has had but one detailed biographer, a survey of his life will not tell a story already too familiar.

## II.

Of an ancient Yorkshire race, with wide estates, Thomas Fairfax inherited through his grandfather, the first Lord Fairfax of Cameron, a tradition of administrative service, of soldiering, and a love of horses. Scholarship, together with a veneration for antiquity, was equally characteristic of his family, and made him the instrument of preserving two national treasures from the violation of war—the glass at York Minster, during and after the siege of the City, and the Bodleian, when Oxford was taken by Parliament. For these two deeds alone he would deserve the gratitude of every Englishman.

After matriculating at St. John's College, Cambridge, at the age of fourteen, Fairfax was sent when still in his teens to serve in the Low Countries, which throughout the first half of the seventeenth century was an acknowledged school of war. He was engaged at the siege of Bois-le-Duc in 1629, bore himself well in

<sup>1</sup> See 'Little General Monck,' in CORNHILL, January, 1936.

such action as came his way, but contracted a serious fever—the first of a succession of illnesses which were to plague him all through his English campaigns, and to continue throughout his life.

His Netherlands service brought him the friendship of the knightly family of Vere, by the side of whom his grandfather had fought. He fell in love with Anne, daughter of Lord Vere, hero of Nieuport and Sluys, and the marriage which ultimately followed was the happiest imaginable. Lady Fairfax accompanied nearly all her husband's campaigns, 'not for any zeal or delight in the war, but through a willing and patient suffering of this undesirable condition.' True to her upbringing, she was the fit wife for a great soldier. A large canvas in the National Portrait Gallery shows the pair when young. Fairfax leans tenderly over his wife, whose face and bearing are captivating. Fairfax himself was dark, and so pronounced was his colouring (particularly when, in his maturity, he grew an imperial beard), that 'Black Tom' was the name his adoring soldiers bestowed upon him; one which, originating in affection, quickly grew to inspire terror in his enemies—terror not of excesses, but of his courage and soldierly efficiency: and the scars which he bore on his face after the wounds of his Yorkshire campaign were famed on many subsequent battlefields.

Of one tradition there was no trace in the Fairfax family—rebellion against the crown. The first lord had served Queen Elizabeth as a diplomatist, and a loyal history stretched much further into the past. Thomas Fairfax and his father Ferdinando bore arms against their sovereign with distaste at the outset, and always with reluctance. 'Black Tom' had, indeed, been given a command by Charles in the first Scottish campaign, and had been knighted in 1640. He had experienced panic in the rout of the English forces by the Scots at Newburn Ford, and had seen the hopelessness of fighting in a cause for which there was no heart.

Charles's subsequent discourtesy to him possibly did as much as anything to decide his future allegiance. Many gentlemen of Yorkshire had asked him to present a petition to the King at a review on Heyworth Moor, protesting against the expense of keeping so many men under arms. Charles practically rode him down; and when, a little later, each man had to decide his own part in the approaching struggle, the Fairfax family sided entire with Parliament. Thomas's own view was simply and clearly expressed: 'I must needs say my judgment was for the Parliament, as the King and Kingdom's great and safest council.' It was one from

which he never wavered. The agony of the decisions of the times was nobly expressed in the well-known letter of Sir William Waller, the Parliamentary general, to his close friend Sir Ralph Hopton, the Royalist. 'We are both on the stage, and we must act the parts that are assigned us in this tragedy. Let us do it in the way of honour, and without personal animosities.' In such a spirit were fought the earlier battles of King and Parliament.

### III.

The influence of the Fairfaxes naturally lay in Yorkshire at the opening of the Civil War. Ferdinando Fairfax was not a great soldier; he bears no comparison with his son, but in the early stages of the campaign the two performed good service by keeping Newcastle's large Royalist force engaged in the north. Both were defeated severely at Adwalton Moor; both were concerned in the fierce captures and recaptures of the woollen towns; both served with valour at the great Parliamentary victory of Marston Moor, where Ferdinando commanded the infantry. Then their ways separated. Ferdinando will be remembered for his successful defence of the vital port of Hull during the critical years 1643-4, but in the year following he resigned his active command to Thomas, retired to York, which after Marston Moor was in Parliament's hands, and disappeared from history.

After the North had been secured, except for a few garrisons, Thomas Fairfax was offered the supreme command of the army of Parliament, with the title of Lord General. Marston Moor, where he had commanded an important detachment, and where he had been seriously wounded in the face, had confirmed his military reputation. He accepted his new responsibility, though with reluctance, for he was never self-seeking. Charles described him as 'the rebels' new brutish general,' but inaccuracy of comment could hardly go further. Fairfax was a model of courtesy. His opponents trusted his word, and were never betrayed. When Lady Fairfax was captured in Yorkshire by the Royalist forces she was restored to her husband in Newcastle's own coach, with an escort of cavalry. When Fairfax was granted the revenues of the Isle of Man from Lady Derby, on that lady's own confession she never had a better steward. As a leader he had shown great personal bravery and tactical skill; in battle he became transported with energy and fire. But the reason for his elevation in 1645 to the commandership-in-chief must be found rather in the fact that



he was without personal enmities, that he was greatly popular with the rank and file, that he was efficient, and that in a period of turmoil and jealousy he was universally trusted.

His first task was to remodel the Army, and in this he had the aid of Cromwell and Skippon. He performed it with supreme success. At the victory of Naseby the New Model proved itself once for all. Fairfax's own part was as usual distinguished. He captured a royal standard with his own hand, and if the genius of the day was in Cromwell and his Ironsides, Fairfax earned sufficient glory, which was heightened by his brilliant campaign in the west against Goring, and by the capture of Bristol and Oxford. The war was then over; but as Sir Jacob Astley, the old Royalist commander, had hinted after his capture, the difficulties of Parliament had in truth merely begun.

Fairfax was no politician. Splendid as a leader of men, he had little interest in and less taste for the negotiations and intrigue which followed the capture of Oxford and the King. His immediate problem was to appease the Army, which was seething with discontent, its pay in arrears, at loggerheads with Westminster, full of religious fanaticism, and on the verge of open mutiny. To his fallen Sovereign he was studiously courteous, and Charles himself acknowledged this. Appointed one of the King's judges in 1648, the whole of the proceedings of the Trial violated every principle which he held dear, and he took no part in the farce of Westminster Hall.

When his name was called to appear, Lady Fairfax, who was in a gallery, rose and addressed the Court in a loud voice, declaring that her husband would never sit in judgment on his King, and that the Court did wrong to name him as a commissioner. She interrupted the proceedings a second time, when Bradshaw required the King's answer to the charge exhibited by the Commons and the good people of England, crying out: 'It is a lie—not half the people. Where are they and their consents?' An officer entreated her to be silent, and she left the court.

There is small reason to doubt the truth of this incident. Actually, Fairfax at the time was unwell; he was subsequently kept in ignorance of the King's fate, and soon after the actual execution had taken place, asked how his Majesty went! He had done all that lay in his power to prevent the act, and, when told the truth, could scarcely believe it. Nor did he hold even his nominal position much longer. Cromwell, seeing the necessity for invading Scotland as a measure of practical defence against a

new and covenanted King, and revering Fairfax's qualities as a leader, pressed him for many hours, on one critical night, to accept the command in the north. The general was obdurate. He would not, under any circumstances, consent to invade Scotland, resigned his position under Parliament, and with much relief retired to his Yorkshire estates, leaving the way open for the triumph of Cromwell, Lambert and Monck—the subjugation of Scotland after the victory of Dunbar.

Fairfax's career as a soldier was almost over. It was without a stain, for in his taking of Colchester, at the Royalist rising the year before Charles's death, although he had been responsible for the execution of the gallant officers Lisle and Lucas, these men had broken their parole, and a swift example was necessary for the peace of the country. He and Cromwell were equally severe with their own men in their reduction of the mutinous Levellers. Fairfax, then as always, was resolute and masterly in action. His suppression of the revolt of 1648, both in Kent and Essex, was in every way an example of a serious crisis boldly met. At the end of his military service, his very name was worth a regiment.

#### IV.

Fairfax's retirement before the campaign of Dunbar gave something to English literature. He had inspired Milton to a sonnet; he was now to give employment to Andrew Marvell, as tutor to his daughter Mary. Marvell found both patron and service congenial, and much of his loveliest poetry was written at, or inspired by the life at, Nunappleton House. Fairfax, besides his interest in Yorkshire antiquities, himself wrote verses, some of which have been preserved, a metrical version of the Psalms, and much translation, as well as an account of his conduct in the Yorkshire campaigns. The rest of his life, but for one important incident, followed the natural course, which only a civil war could have broken. Out of sympathy with the Protectorship, refused the one favour he asked of Cromwell (a clemency for his son-in-law the Duke of Buckingham), he remained in obscurity until 1659, the year following Cromwell's death, when he was elected a member for Yorkshire in the brief Parliament of the Second Protector.

In the turmoil of the interregnum, Fairfax once more played a leading part. He was convinced that a free Parliament, and the ultimate return of the exiled King, was the only solution of future government. Lambert, having crushed Booth's Royalist rising in

Cheshire, was at the time the dominant personality in England ; and in the winter of 1659, he was marching north to oppose Monck, then commander in Scotland, and afterwards Duke of Albemarle, who lay in Coldstream with a small force, waiting events. Lambert was suspected of wishing himself Protector, and Fairfax planned to send a message to Monck by a kinsman, with a promise to raise Yorkshire for a free election. The young man made the hazardous journey with success. Monck replied that he would watch Lambert as a cat watches a mouse. Fairfax thereupon took steps to enlist men, and at the very sound of his name, Lambert's rear-guard transferred their allegiance to him. Monck advanced to York, to which town Fairfax, crippled with gout, was borne in his coach, Lambert disappeared, and the old Parliamentary leader and the former Royalist feasted and conferred. They can seldom have met since the battle of Nantwich fifteen years before, when Monck's Irish regiment in Charles's service had deserted him, and he had been captured by Fairfax.

After the meeting, Monck proceeded to London, assured that his rear was in safety, and began the long process of negotiations which ended in the return of the Stuarts. As a servant of Parliament, had Fairfax actually appeared in arms for the King, Monck's duty might have been to oppose him ; as his cry was nominally for a free election, he could use him as an ally.

Fairfax's last public service was to head the commission to the Hague to ask Charles the Second to return. He was courteously received, and was given a formal pardon under the Royal seal for his services against the Stuart house. Then once more, his duty done, he retired to Nunappleton, to his books, his tenants and his horses. He could ride little himself in his last years, but he bred and owned some of the finest horses in England : and not the least of the ironies of the Restoration was that the charger which he presented to the new King, and which Charles rode at his coronation, was by Bridladon, out of a famous chestnut mare which Fairfax rode at Naseby.

Inevitably, the remaining years were sad. Lady Fairfax died in 1665, and he saw many of his former colleagues suffer from the excesses of the restored Parliament. He sat most of the day in a large mobile wooden chair of curious design, which he propelled about his magnificent gardens, for he came in the end to be completely crippled with gout. He died in 1671, and lies buried at Bilbrough Church, in his native county.

The most fitting epitaph upon Fairfax is from a strange source, an elegy by his wild son-in-law, Buckingham :

'He never knew what envy was, or hate ;  
His soul was filled with worth and honesty,  
And with another thing beside, quite out of date,  
Call'd modesty.'

## V.

Fairfax's own character was in every respect simpler than the problems and situations with which he was concerned. His nobility is without question. He was prepared to hazard everything for a cause which, at the outset, was by no means sympathetic to his own class. It was only necessary for him to make up his mind for him to adhere to his decision inflexibly. With the finer problems of government, as of religion, he was little concerned. In so far as his beliefs could be made to fit an ecclesiastical policy, he was a presbyterian ; but in an age of fanaticism, he was on the side of toleration. He was even prepared to stomach Bishops if they, in their turn, would govern the Church with reason. As a soldier, he was not in the highest class. He bears no comparison with Cromwell ; his talents were rather those of Monck, who had shared his education in the Netherlands. They were chiefly tactical. He had an eye for country, an ability to learn from experience, and an inspiring courage.

In the council chamber he spoke little, and for a very good reason ; like Charles the First, he stammered. His impediment was such that he had to have a spokesman at the Hague in 1660 ; in action, it disappeared completely. This fact is an important one ; and if it be added that he was by nature not merely lethargic, but without the spur of ambition, it may clearly be seen how much of a figurehead he must needs have become in the stormy councils immediately preceding the Commonwealth.

Yet even as a figurehead, his importance is considerable. One of the few Parliamentary leaders whose integrity was above question, his ability was sufficient to inspire the army when most it needed it, and to keep its hotheads at least tolerably quiet during several critical periods. He lacked the strength, though not the will, to save the King's life, but he atoned for this at least in some measure by his important, if unspectacular, part in the Restoration. Long before his death, the famous old general had become a legend, doughty and revered. History has been as gentle to him as was his own nature.

*OLD MARTHA.*

BY MARGARET MELLER.

It was the lad's love my husband brought home to me one day last summer that made me think of old Martha, who had been dead for many years, and whom I knew as a child.

I had forgotten, too, about the lad's love with its grey-green leaves and musk-like scent. It used to be grown in all the village gardens, and a nosegay was not complete without 'a bit o' lad's love' to make it smell sweet.

It grew in Martha's garden, too, along with the sweet-williams and pinks, near the sweet-briar bush and the little white roses, which were called 'Seven Sisters,' because they clustered seven on a stem.

Martha was a hardy and shrewd countrywoman. Her brown, lined old face was lighted up with dark piercing eyes which looked searchingly into one's own, as if they would probe the inmost thoughts and secrets that might lie hidden away in some distant corner of the soul.

She loved the fields, and knew every plant and its use. She would set out, wearing a big sunhat, and grasping a long ash stick, on which she leaned as she walked, while on her arm was a basket to hold the roots that her sharp eyes would discern in the remote spots of the woods and fields.

It was bad luck, however, if a robin crossed her path, for then, on that day at least, she certainly would not expect to find the particular herb for which she was seeking.

She was very superstitious. I have heard my mother tell that one day when Martha was in our house, a sudden long and loud noise came from a cupboard that was built in the thickness of the old wall. Something seemed to be shattering it to pieces. Martha crouched down to the ground, covering her face in fear.

Investigations showed nothing out of place, and the cupboard was undamaged.

Martha went home with melancholy shakings of the head, and full of troubled forebodings.

Her husband died soon after.—Nothing would shake her from

the belief that this had been a 'token' or 'omen' foretelling her husband's death, and not, as might reasonably be supposed, a fall of old plaster that had got dislodged in the inside of the wall.

I remember a vivid story that Martha used to relate. She was a young woman at the time, and one night, lighted by a big harvest moon, she and a friend had taken supper to their husbands, who were working late to get in the harvest.

Passing through a field on their way home, they heard a rattling of chains. Then a form, with cloven feet, and eyes as big as saucers, stood out in the moonlight.

It was the devil.

They both took to their heels, and, scarcely pausing for breath, ran until they were under the friendly shelter of home.

Martha always finished up the story with, 'And Jane (her friend) was in bed for a week afterwards.'

She would never have listened to the suggestion that the devil was, in all probability, a quiet old cart-horse waiting for the harvest wagon.

Martha's mother, who was long since dead and forgotten, had believed in witches. Martha could remember her, busy one day with some sewing, when an old woman, supposed to be a witch, looked in at the open window. Her mother immediately crossed the scissors, thereby preventing an evil spell being cast on the home.

Another witch story told how two horses were dragging a wagon up a hill, when suddenly the horses stood still and refused to go on, despite the wagoner's whip. An old woman who stood watching called out, 'Whip the wheels, master, not the horses. Whip the wheels; that is where the witch is.' The wagoner whipped the wheels, and the horses went on.

Martha's attendances at church were rare; nevertheless, she looked upon a certain seat at the end of a pew behind the font as indisputably her own.

The latch of the old church door lifted and dropped noisily as the worshippers entered. Everyone wore a self-conscious air, and seemed anxious to get to his seat. I remember one little woman, her face shining with soap and her hair pulled tightly back into a knob bristling with hairpins, who would nearly run to take refuge in her pew.

Martha would walk in carrying a large old-fashioned prayer-book on which she had placed a flower and a Sunday pocket handkerchief edged with pillow lace, both kept in place by her thumb.

With a solemn and rather gloomy expression she would advance unswervingly in the direction of her seat. If, during one of her long absences from church, a neighbour had imprudently appropriated it, Martha would stand in the aisle and wait grimly, until the intruder had to discard the attitude of being unaware of what was expected of her, and elbow down the other occupants of the pew until Martha was in entire possession of her corner seat.

Martha attended funerals with the same expression she kept for church-going. I am afraid that her presence was not always wholly due to respect for the departed, as I remember hearing that on one occasion she took a hammer in her pocket to break up a certain piece of furniture if it had not been left to her. Fortunately the hammer was not needed.

Her end came suddenly. She had a stroke and never regained consciousness. The moon was full and high in the sky when her daughter came to my mother for some white stockings to prepare old Martha for burial.

I wonder whether she had had a token warning her that her time had come. She always insisted that the daughter who ran away from home years ago, and became a wandering pedlar, was still alive, because there had been no token of her death.

A hard childhood and a hard life had been Martha's. I think that it was her upbringing that had made her suspicious and always a little inscrutable, though she was very faithful to those whom she trusted.

She had definite ideas of right and wrong, and she never missed 'Church' on Ash-Wednesday, when, with set face, she would respond with a stern 'Amen' to the execration called down on 'The man who moved his neighbour's landmark,' and on all the other evil-doers specially marked out in the Commination Service.

Whatever her religion—and it was difficult sometimes to disentangle it from the superstitions and prejudices with which it was wrapped around—she nevertheless uttered a great truth in the averment that invariably followed after she had told the story of any act of injustice or wrong-doing in the village.

'Ah well,' she would say, 'God A'Mighty's above the devil.'

## *A CALL OF THE WEST.*

BY W. A. DONALDSON.

MRS. LO LUM remained sitting on one of the plain wooden chairs, in the little Limehouse Mission Hall, while the few Chinese Christians, who had been present at the evening service just concluded, quietly left the building.

Now that she was alone, she knelt and remained kneeling for some time. Her petition was brief. But, as it was from the depths of her heart, she knew that it would be answered.

Mrs. Lo Lum was and had been for a long time deeply religious. Often she had told her Chinese husband that God, who heard one's prayers, never failed to answer them when they came from the heart. Nor did it matter, she had added simply, even though the request concerned some happening at the farthest point of all the wide world: God heard and answered.

That was why, when on her knees, Mrs. Lo Lum had murmured fervently: 'Almighty God, cause him, cause Lo Lum, my husband, to come back to me: let it be to him as "A call of the West."' '

And Lo Lum, her husband, husband of Ellen Smith, born and bred an East-end girl of Limehouse, London, heard the call: he heard the call when he was standing on the south side of the tiny island of The Shameen, very close to the vast city of Canton in South China.

Every morning for weeks past Lo Lum had been standing practically at that same spot, gazing at the hundreds of house-boats bobbing up and down under the influence of the tide on the Pearl River: gazing at them and at their slavish Hakka population, with increasing feelings of disgust.

This morning he knew what it was that he had heard singing in his heart. Forthwith, unhesitatingly, he turned his thoughts and his steps to the West.

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Though the floor on which Mrs. Lo Lum was kneeling was bare, hard and cold, she felt as though she were resting on the softest of down. As she arose from her knees her head knocked against the wooden ledge upon which lay the prayer and hymn books. But



her face still retained its beatific expression. She had been, she believed, in the presence of God.

Quietly she left the Mission Hall, her heart singing rapturously, even while she gazed at the drabness of Limehouse around her. She went to her little home in Pennyfields, there to prepare for the coming of Lo Lum, her husband, whom she knew would be with her five weeks from that date. Her heart told her so.

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Lo Lum was one of the most respected of his class in the Pennyfields district, where he had lived happily for years with his wife : and, in Limehouse, he and his laundry were equally well known. He was industrious, sober, frugal and thrifty, as only Chinese seem to know how to be : but if Lo Lum could be said to be under the influence of any vice, it was the vice of gambling, which vice, in a very mild way, he shared with almost every Oriental. He loved to play fan-tan, mah-jong, glock-glock and other Chinese gambling games.

But Lo Lum looked not upon the Face of Fortune greedily, for to him gambling, essential to his nature, he indulged in as a pastime : not to win a little money and thus lose a lot of friendship.

By sheer hard work he had greatly increased the considerable amount of money given to him by his father when Lo Lum, senior, had left Limehouse and the laundry he had founded to go to his native China, there to worship at his family shrine before he too joined his ancestors.

Lo Lum's father had often expressed himself to the effect that ever since he had left his seafaring life at Wapping and had wandered into the Pennyfields district and settled at Limehouse, he had always loved to live in Limehouse, but never had he thought of dying in it.

He knew that he must obey the 'Call of the East' and, like a true Celestial, return to the Flowery Land.

Accordingly, he had made his arrangements, and, with ceremony befitting so solemn an occasion, he had bidden farewell to his many good friends of Limehouse. With a heavy heart he had turned his eyes to the Orient, to far-away China, 10,000 miles and five weeks' journey away, to a land which he had not seen for fully fifty years. His wife, even more accustomed to Limehouse and its environs than her husband—as she had lived in the place ever since, as a child, she had come to it with her parents—accompanied him. Long, long ago her parents had returned to the Flowery

Land : and she was glad to follow in their footsteps to worship, as they had done, at the family ancestral graves.

. . . . .

All the persuasions—sometimes ardent, more frequently subtle, poured into the attentive ears of their son, Lo Lum, that he should accompany them—had found him, though ever polite and filial, unresponsive to the last.

He would not accompany them to China : he did not feel the 'Call of the East.' How could he, he asked, visualise a country he had never seen : and how could he, he had added, think reverently of ancestral shrines he had never known ? He was a Chinese, no doubt, and could speak Cantonese after a fashion ; but why should he go to a land in which he felt he would be a complete stranger. Limehouse and the rest of the East-end of London had been good to him ever since he had romped in it during childhood ; then, why should he leave it ? Why should he leave a flourishing business, especially as he was still only a middle-aged man ? And, above all, reflected Lo Lum, why should my honourable parents expect me to leave my wife and my home, where happiness has always been for us both ?

He knew, of course, why they had so unscrupulously sought to separate him once and for all from his wife, to whom they could never really be reconciled : for she to them was no Chinese, no Cantonese. She, their son's wife, was not even a London girl of the East-end, for she was to them that worst of all the human species : she was a Eurasian with, as was so often gratuitously said, all the worst qualities of the European and the Asiatic.

But Lo Lum had not worried much about that, for he, a lover of cricket, played the game of life well. He had been a healthy-minded East-end youth and, in spite of his yellow complexion, his dark almond eyes, straight, coarse, black hair and Chinese name, he was well liked by the people of the district. At the Council School he had mixed freely with the other Limehouse lads ; was indeed much smarter than many of them mentally, as had been afterwards proved when his turn came to manage his father's laundry.

Therefore, like most East-end London lads, when it comes to the question of marriage, he had pleased himself. He had long loved the quiet and serious-minded young woman, Ellen Smith, who with her mother, the notorious Eliza, worked in his father's

laundry. Had his Ellen been a Chinese or even an East-end girl, it would no doubt, he sometimes reflected, have been better for all concerned ; but that she was a Eurasian was no fault of hers ; it would not and it did not prevent him from marrying her.

And their marriage had been quite happy, even though they had not been blessed with children ; with no son to carry on the Lo Lum family tradition of worshipping at the tablets of their ancestors, daily to burn the little incense sticks of remembrance.

After his marriage, to please his parents and because he himself was not averse from the practice, Lo Lum had continued to burn the little incense sticks before his family shrine in his own home. And his quiet little Eurasian wife, Ellen, daughter of an East-end drunken harlot and of a wandering Chinese sailorman, exercising the sweet charitableness of a good Christian woman, had raised no sort of objection.

Regularly, every Sunday evening, she set out to attend the service at the Christian Mission Hall for Chinese. For many years she had done so, having come early in her girlhood under the influence of a leading member of the Mission. The service invariably was of short duration, and, it over, she could rely with certainty, on her return to her home in Pennyfields, upon finding her husband, as she had left him, standing near the family tablets and burning the little incense sticks of remembrance for the Lo Lum ancestors.

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It was indeed a lamentable fact that Mrs. Lo Lum's mother had been and still was, to a lesser extent, a notorious Limehouse character. Born in Whitechapel, Eliza Smith had, years before, drifted into Limehouse, and there had speedily become known as quite the worst woman in the district. So low had she sunk at one time that she did not seek to hide the fact that she frequently consorted with the greasiest-looking Oriental firemen and other humble workers from the big liners lying in the adjoining docks. Drink had her in a terrible clutch and, to satisfy her craving, she would probably have shrunk at nothing. She was a perfect harridan of a woman.

And one awful day, when the unexpected had happened and she realised that the child that was to be born to her had been fathered ' by that Chink, Ah Kwan,' as she had called him, she had rushed precipitately to the docks, waving in her hand a whisky bottle and searching everywhere for her Chinese paramour, to brain him.

Surrounded by a number of her cronies, women as drunken as herself, she had, later, held aloft a bottle of beer, sprinkled some of the fluid upon the head of her infant, and, in the midst of fiendish, maudlin devilry, had shrieked to all the world that the child would be known thereafter as Ellen Smith—'Ellen Smith,' the drunken Eliza had repeated loudly, leering at the pack of frowsty women in front of her—'my mother's name—my mother, a far, far better woman than any of you have ever been or will ever be.'

Then had come an outburst of tears, a torrent of cursing and reviling of her cronies, followed by Eliza's peremptory order that they should clear out of her sight at once.

The neglect by the mother of her child, whom she frequently referred to as her 'little Chink bastard,' was that unruly woman's unconscious kindness to her little daughter. The more the child was neglected by her disreputable mother, the more was she cared for by Kitty Kadoorie, the elderly spinster daughter of a rag, bone and balloon merchant of the district. The drunken Eliza was only too pleased to have the child off her hands; and so it befell that it was Kitty Kadoorie, a deeply religious woman and a pillar of the local Christian Mission to the Chinese, who had the spiritual training of the little Ellen in the all-important and impressionable years of her girlhood.

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When drunken Eliza first learned that her daughter, having mastered the rudiments of a brief education at the local Council School, had become a regular attender at the 'Chinks' Mission Hall,' as she called it, she had felt inclined to exercise her authority by prohibiting further visits. Instead, she had again, in the presence of her cronies, indulged in another of her drunken orgies, during which she had once more held a beer bottle aloft and had shouted: 'Far better the little bastard should go to the Chinks' Mission than drift to Hell like her mother and live with the likes of you.' The wretched woman had then sunk into a chair, sobbing bitterly, to get up and curse her cronies out of her house.

Such was Eliza Smith, mother of Mrs. Lo Lum.

Only once had Eliza seriously attempted to influence her daughter and, strangely enough, she then felt that she had triumphed exceedingly. Her drunken friends having told her that Ellen's next step would be to 'join the Sallies,' the mother had turned upon her daughter in fury, had clutched her roughly by the

shoulders, stared fiercely into her eyes, and had shrieked that she would 'brain her' if she disgraced her mother by joining 'that band of fanatical fools.' Shrieking louder, she had added: 'I'd sooner see you on the road with me, with lousy sailors as your lovers, than in one of them poke bonnets and looking like a plaster saint. Stick to the Mission Hall, my girl, and don't disgrace yourself and me by romping around with a pack of blasphemers.'

And to Ellen's utter astonishment, her terrible mother had then added: 'For it is blasphemy, bloody blasphemy, to shout about God Almighty as they do, with their tambourines and trash.'

Then had followed another of Eliza's spasmodic and vehement outbursts, ending on this occasion by her loudly exclaiming that her daughter was 'a credit and an example to Limehouse, as good a girl as ever lived, in spite of her rotten mother.'

In Ellen's arms the dissipated woman had then sobbed as though her heart would break, her daughter vainly trying to quell the terrible tempest. 'God,' she had murmured gently, 'will, through His gracious son, Jesus Christ, yet bring you to Him.'

And Eliza Smith, startled and staring, had shrieked in answer: 'He will not, you mad little wretch. He will not. As I have lived, so shall I die: the vilest woman in Limehouse. Get out of my sight.'

. . . . .

Strong as had been the opposition from the Lo Lum family to the marriage of their son to a Eurasian, it was as nothing, in fire and fury, to the opposition of Eliza Smith to the marriage of her daughter 'to a Chink.' She would, she shrieked, have nothing to do with 'such a pack of Mongols.' The idea of having 'such a mixture of almond-eyed monstrosities' connected with her was, she declared, 'unthinkable, intolerable, impossible'; and, she had added more naturally, it was 'bloody awful.'

After the wedding ceremony, at which Eliza had indignantly refused to be present, Ellen had seen very little of her mother. Quietly she had acquiesced in her husband's request that she should have as little to do with her as possible.

And so the years had passed on happily and peaceably for Mr. and Mrs. Lo Lum in Limehouse.

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And Lo Lum, standing on the tiny island of The Shameen, in far-away China, thought of his unaccountable folly in so suddenly

leaving Limehouse and his gentle, good, little Christian wife, Ellen, to go to see for himself what, to him as a Chinese, was meant by the 'Call of the East.'

He had been greatly worried by the strange and sudden stoppage of letters from his father in Canton ; and the anxiety caused by the absence of such news had been considerably increased by a notification, from the London manager of the Hong-Kong Banking Corporation, to the effect that their Canton agent had written that Lo Lum's remittances were no longer being taken up.

Thereupon Lo Lum, with secretiveness, much more of the Orient than of the Occident, had decided to leave for China. With equal secrecy he had arranged with his Chinese foreman at the laundry to be his deputy there, to pay Mrs. Lo Lum a generous amount every week regularly and, most important of all, to say to no one that he, Lo Lum, had followed in the footsteps of his family.

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To Mrs. Lo Lum, on her return from the Mission Hall, it had come as a very great shock to discover that her husband was not in their home. Everything about the Lo Lum family tablets was as usual, and even the little incense sticks continued to burn slowly. But Lo Lum himself was not present, as he had invariably been in the past.

Though her heart had been buoyant with the joyous fervour she had been experiencing at the Mission Hall, she now felt gradually creeping over her a cold, dreary feeling that seemed to bode impending danger. She wandered about the lonely house, uncertain as to what she should do next. She felt that Lo Lum must have left a message for her ; and it was in her own private little room that she found it.

'ELLEN, MY DEAREST ONE,' so ran the letter, 'Ah Sin, sister of Kai Fong, my foreman, will come to you to-night and will stay with you as your companion and attendant. Grieve not at my departure : you will be well cared for : Kai Fong has my instructions. For you only has my heart ever felt love. I shall think of you : of me you will perhaps try to think kindly. If, where and when, we may meet again, we shall be happy.—LO LUM, Your Husband.'

A slight disturbance at the door caused Mrs. Lo Lum to refrain from giving expression to the poignant sorrow that gripped at her heart. Someone at the door was slowly opening it. Very

quietly this was being done and, in a moment, Ah Sin, sister of Kai Fong, had entered the room. Quite close to Mrs. Lo Lum Ah Sin knelt reverently. She then looked up and passed over the key which was still in her hand. 'This was given to me by my brother, your husband's foreman, so that I might come to you. Though it is the will of the Gods that you should be afflicted, my heart, as a woman and a widow, shares your deep sorrow. Grieve not. See! Here, on this floor, are my upturned palms for you to walk upon. Until you wish me no more, I am your servant.'

Almost inaudibly Mrs. Lo Lum said: 'Ah Sin, kneel no more: come sit with me: help me to mend my broken heart, heavy as lead. But Jesus Christ, my Saviour, will send succour to me. It is He who takes away all sorrow from the heart.'

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Even much more clearly than if Lo Lum, her husband, had written it in his letter did Mrs. Lo Lum know that he had gone to join his family in China; had gone to worship at their ancestral tombs near Canton; to discover if for him there could ever be a 'Call of the East.' What she also knew and what she dreaded most was that her husband must have had in mind the possibility of being persuaded to take unto himself a Chinese wife with the hope of there being a son to carry on the family worship to the glory of their ancestors. If so, would he ever return to her? Mrs. Lo Lum's heart at that time was heavy with doubt.

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And so days and weeks and a few months passed slowly, slowly, for Mrs. Lo Lum at Limehouse. Ah Sin attended to her zealously, faithfully, affectionately. Silently, both women went about the house, seldom uttering more words than were necessary. Some days Mrs. Lo Lum did not speak at all. Then Ah Sin would kneel before her mistress, take her hands in hers, murmur to her that it was the will of the Gods that women should be so afflicted, and that they and they alone felt the pangs of departure from loved ones.

Before rising from her knees she beseeched her mistress to cleanse from her heart all sorrow regarding Lo Lum. She, a Chinese who also intended in time to go to China, knew that once a true son or daughter of the Flowery Land went back to the East, he or she never returned to the West. For love of Mrs. Lo Lum, and though it nearly broke her heart to say so, she had to whisper what

was the truth : ' Lo Lum will never again return to Limehouse ; the " Call of the East " has come to him and he has answered it.' This Ah Sin said and believed.

At Mrs. Lo Lum's tear-stained face the kindly Chinese woman had then ventured to look, expecting there to see the marks of indelible sorrow and resignation. But though the tears were trickling down her mistress's cheeks, her eyes were bright and seemed almost to be smiling. And around the gentle mouth of Mrs. Lo Lum there was a heavenly sweet expression. ' Ah Sin,' she said quietly, ' what God has told me is that my husband, Lo Lum, will come back to me ; and to him it will seem like unto a " Call of the West."'

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And standing on The Shameen, looking at the Hakka house-boat people, little better than slaves, Lo Lum heard the ' Call of the West ' singing in his heart ; and, answering it at once and gladly, he turned his thoughts and his steps towards his Ellen and home.

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As the big liner slowly nosed her way to the wharf Mrs. Lo Lum glanced up at the large number of passengers eagerly awaiting to disembark. Though she could not identify her husband, she knew that he was there. She believed that God had directed her. Since finding the letter in her private room, none had passed between her husband and herself : and Lo Lum had refrained from sending her a cablegram while *en route*. In spite of the urgency of the call that had brought him back to the West, he was yet uncertain how his little wife, his dear Ellen, would react to his strange conduct in so suddenly going away for a few months. Would she understand, forgive and forget ? He did not know ; consequently, he had done nothing.

He remained behind while the others crowded off the ship ; and the vessel was practically empty of its human cargo when he ventured on deck. Even the wharf looked empty. But at once his eyes were focussed upon a small figure waiting patiently ; a neat, small, feminine figure, around whose smiling face the light of love was glowing like a halo of happiness. Swiftly he made his way towards the halo, and gathered the little figure in his arms.

' It was God who told me that you would come by this boat,' she whispered as she walked by his side away from the wharf.



'And how was it,' she asked, 'that you knew I would be awaiting you?'

'Something in my heart told me so to act and to expect you to be here; the "Call of the West," I think it must have been, my dearest.'

Together they continued to walk to the taxi-cab which would take them back to their home in Limehouse. As of old they walked, Oriental fashion, hand in hand.

Suddenly he seemed to realise this and, gently withdrawing his hand, he as gently linked her arm with his. 'They who have heard the "Call of the West,"' said he, 'should walk in the way of the West.'

And she had whispered: 'So shall we until the end, my dear husband, Lo Lum.'

### CONSOLATION.

Yes, I am almost glad that you are dead,  
In spite of all the loneliness and tears,  
And lack of love to light advancing years;  
For now you know what never could be said,  
No longer by my feeble words misled.  
Now you have angel's eyes, whose radiance sears  
Through lying flesh to see the soul, and peers  
So well that even shyest thoughts are read,  
And thoughts so delicate that they must die  
Long e'er they reach the tongue. No need to lie  
Awake now, plotting how to reach you through  
This strange, harsh wall of flesh,—no more to rue  
The pitiful results. All that is past,  
And, dearest, you will understand at last.

JOAN EASTMAN.

## PRE-VICTORIAN SCRAPBOOKS.

BY BEATRICE A. LEES.

*We may see how all things are  
Seas and cities, near and far  
And the flying fairies' looks  
In the picture story-books.*

*R. L. Stevenson, 'A Child's Garden of Verses.'*

IF Lewis Carroll's 'Alice' saw no use in a book 'without pictures or conversations,' how high in Wonderland reckoning must stand the book which is all compact of pictures, and how irresistible to those who have passed through the little door into the child's enchanted garden must be that super-picture-book, the scrapbook, with its topsy-turvy, higgledy-piggledy inconsequence, its rhymes without reason, and its general air of irresponsible good-fellowship!

Who first invented the 'scrapbook,' as distinct from the older 'picture-book,' or illustrated 'album'? To whom did the idea first occur of that gay patchwork of artistic and literary shreds and patches? The word 'scrapbook' is not recorded in the Oxford Dictionary before 1825, but it was about 1813 that the Harry and Lucy of Maria Edgeworth's *Early Lessons* helped their mother 'to paste some prints into a large paper book,' and it is certain that children's scrapbooks were in fashion in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, a time of great zeal for popular education, prolific in the production of all sorts of juvenile literature.

Two such books, flotsam and jetsam from life-tides which have long since ebbed, lie before me as I write. Unearthed from the dusty recesses of an old oak chest, faded and ragged with a hundred years of wear and tear, they still breathe something of the eternal freshness of childhood, the timeless spirit of the nursery world, where small things are great, and great matters shrink into littleness. Both were made in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, and recall an even earlier age.

The older of the two is a small folio, in a cloth cover over which marbled paper has been pasted. Its pages are of that blue sugar paper which was used to cover the cheapest of those tiny children's books of the time which have contributed freely to this pleasant

medley of prints and engravings, plain and coloured, gathered together in fantastic association, as shapes and sizes dictated. The second volume is larger and less homely, more elaborate in production, with a substantial binding, and engravings of some artistic value on its brown paper pages.

These shabby, half-forgotten childish records have more than a merely sentimental interest for the modern generation. They reflect pre-Victorian English everyday life from the special point of view of the children of the prosperous classes, 'Little Master' and 'Little Miss,' the denizens of the sheltered nurseries and schoolrooms of comfortable middle-class English homes, the future 'Victorians' of the new era.

The 'Little Master' who was the first possessor of the two volumes was born in 1827, three years before the death of George IV. The world of his childhood was full of political and social unrest, but the pages of his scrapbooks picture a peaceful enough scene of household and village industries, country sports, and quiet family life. If fleeting glimpses are caught of the darker England of the 'poorer classes,' of the boy-sweep, the cripple, the gipsy and the beggar, their destitution only serves as a foil to the rather condescending charity of their well-to-do 'betters.' The general tone, suggestive of Edgeworthian *Early Lessons* and *Moral Tales*, is redeemed from priggishness by a spirit of playful gaiety. 'Little Master,' in tail-coat, brightly coloured trousers, and high-crowned hat, or in short jacket, frilled collar, and peaked and tasselled cap, vies with his peers in the manly sports of 'skaiting,' leap-frog, whipping top and peg-top, 'shooting with Bow and Arrow,' trap ball, skittles, see-saw, hoop-trundling, or marbles. In gentler mood, when 'Little Miss' is with him, he shows 'Jane' his 'handsome Fairing' of a wooden horse, pushes her swing, plays battledore and shuttlecock with her, flies kites and 'Air Balloons,' blows 'Bladders,' or sails his toy-boat to amuse her, or again, walks demurely, hand in hand with her, across the fields to church, or, clothed in deepest sables, sheds tears with her over 'Sister Maria's Grave! poor little thing!'

Prim and conventional in outward seeming as are these quaint little people, they move in a free, open-air setting of country sights and sounds, the old agricultural England of squires and yeomen, craftsmen and peasants. Into their lives come as intimate figures not only the leisured gentry, the gaitered sportsman, with gun and dog, the huntsman leaping a gate, the 'Noble Skaiter,' doing the

outside edge in top-hat and long-skirted coat, but also the busy workers, men and women; the farmer, returning from market, the blue-smocked wagoner, the shepherd with his crook, the reaper with his sickle, the mower, sharpening his scythe, the woodcutter and the road-mender, with bare-armed milkmaids and butter-churners, washerwomen, and vendors of fruit, eggs and fish, in short quilted petticoats and aprons, white caps, and wide-brimmed straw hats; the small tradesman, too, and the craftsman, the butcher, the farrier, the blacksmith and the cooper. Along the grass-edged roads pass the wayfarers, 'Tom the Tinker,' the hawker, the pedlar with 'Pretty toys for Good Girls and Boys,' the 'Traveling Musicians,' with fiddle and tambourine; the newsboy sounds his horn to announce 'Great News,' and the night-watchman, in caped coat, stands on guard, lantern in hand, outside his sentry-box shelter. All the picturesque, unhurried activities of self-supporting village communities, sleepy country towns and seaports are here, and in these communities young and old, rich and poor, are seen as fellow-members of a closely related social group, bound together by similar interests and an ordered co-operation. The children of the farm lack the luxuries and accomplishments of the children of the hall, but they are well dressed and well fed, and their practical training takes attractive forms. 'Little Betsy' draws water from a real 'Pump,' and Peggy blows up the fire from her three-legged stool, while she talks to George 'about the Cows,' or, dressed in pink gown and coquettish straw bonnet, feeds the chickens with George looking on, or rides her mule to market, to sell her dainty basketful of eggs. Though the influence of Morland's idealisation of rural England may be suspected in these pictures, it is at least evident that English children of every rank were in close touch with animals, birds and flowers, and knew something of the lure of the open road. Horses and dogs, in particular, appear as the friends and companions of all sorts and conditions of men and women.

The happy comradeship of man and horse, soon, it is to be feared, to be a thing of the past, was still strong and vital. All classes of society rode, on horse, or mule, or ass, or drove in horse-drawn coaches, post-chaises, 'gentlemen's carriages,' and country carts and wagons. Teams of four or six were common sights. Pickford's red-wheeled 'Fly Van' thundered along the high-road, its four splendid horses urged to their utmost speed by the scarlet-coated, top-hatted coachman, to the accompaniment of the guard's

bugle, blown from the dicky behind. In the scrapbooks, boys and girls alike have their own favourite ponies, and very attractive they look, cantering over grass, or sedately pacing the roadway, 'Little Miss' in a long, high-waisted maroon habit and a plumed hat, 'Little Master' in maroon jacket, tight yellow trousers and low-crowned hat, his hands well down on the neck of his black pony, or, smartly dressed in white waistcoat and purple coat, waving his hat from the back of a long-tailed, high-stepping grey, or waiting to start his morning ride, with groom and dog in attendance; or again, a 'Boy in Danger,' clinging desperately to his chestnut runaway.

The fathers and mothers of these young riders are also constantly in the saddle. In spite of voluminous habits and towering riding hats and bonnets, with veils and feathers floating in the wind, the country ladies of the early nineteenth century are practised horsewomen, and can even, on occasion, 'Chastise' a 'roguish Ostler.' The green-coated squire, 'with game-bag, powder-horn and gun,' sallies forth on his sturdy 'shooting pony,' the farmer jogs slowly home on his cob, his comely wife 'riding double' behind him, the old mill-horse carries the miller's man and his flour-sacks safely over the stream. The very nursery has its rocking-horse, and the village children play at 'Miss in her Coach.' Charming little coloured prints, published in 1824 by William Darton of Holborn Hill, show the white 'Cart Horse' and the 'Dray Horse,' standing patiently at ease in their rustic harness, and the blue pages of the older scrapbook are filled with prints of every type and kind of horse, in fact and fiction: the 'Pack Horse,' the 'Old English Road Horse,' the 'Hunter,' the 'Race Horse,' the 'Arabian Horse,' the 'Charger,' the cart-horses 'Gipsey' and 'Smiler,' and the roadster 'Dobbin.' The feats of 'horsemanship' in the circus, the brave equipment of the 'Dragoon,' the 'cuirassier,' or the 'Light Horse Man,' would excite a child's wonder and admiration, imagination would be quickened by the pictures of the 'Flying Horse,' that 'Winged Horse,' the 'ancient badge and cognizance' of the Inner Temple, and of the Magic Horse of fairy-lore, and laughter would be provoked by the adventures of John Gilpin's 'nimble steed.' But already the enemy was at the gate. A rough woodcut preserves the memory of the primitive 'Velocipede,' or 'Swift Walker,' a two-wheeled machine 'to ride cock-horse upon, sitting astride and pushing it along with the toes.' On the first page of the second scrapbook is pasted an engraving of 'Mr. Gurney's

Steam Carriage as seen running in the Regents Park, Nov<sup>r</sup>. 6th 1827.' 'Little Master's' great-grandchildren will drive toy motor-cars where he bestrode a hobby-horse; they will ride bicycles where he rode a pony. They will have a wider outlook and more mechanical skill, but they will have to a great extent lost the living contacts which lent reality to the crudest cuts and prints of horse and mule in the days of George the Fourth.

Hardly less ubiquitous than the horse in the scrapbooks, the dog appears there as a constant and indispensable factor in the life of the English country-side. Foxhounds, setters, pointers, spaniels, greyhounds and lurchers, are used for sport, the spotted 'plum-pudding,' 'coach,' or 'carriage' dog, recently restored to favour, the bull-dog, the mastiff, and the shepherd's dog, the 'Newfoundland Dog,' the 'Greenland Dog,' the 'Large Water Spaniel' and the 'Large Rough Water Dog,' the 'Ban Dog,' the 'Cur Dog,' and the 'Lap Dog,' all play their appointed parts. 'Cato,' basket in mouth, 'goes well to market,' 'Pompey' jumps at his young master's white pigeons, 'Trim' takes a walk by the river with 'Little William.' Dressed-up dogs masquerade as men and women in a set of Lilliputian caricatures, and in the coloured illustrations of 'Mother Hubbard,' of which two editions have been cut up for the oldest scrapbook, her 'poor dog' achieves lasting literary fame in the nursery library.

Other pets are cats, rabbits, pigeons, and cage-birds of various kinds. 'Little Miss' does not, like Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey*, despise 'the heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing a doormouse, feeding a canary-bird, or watering a rose-bush.' She saves her parrot and her canary from the importunities of 'Puss,' and 'peeps' at 'Gold Fish' in a glass bowl. 'Ann and Jane' have a 'favourite Lamb,' which, like 'Daisy' in Maria Edgeworth's moving tale of 'Simple Susan,' feeds out of their hands, and follows them about, and 'Henry' owns a 'little Goat,' with splendid twisted horns.

Children who were contemporaries of Thomas Bewick, and who knew their scrapbooks from cover to cover, would have a very fair acquaintance with the names and appearance of most British beasts and birds, and would have formed a more or less accurate idea of the characteristics of the wild animals of foreign countries. This would be corrected by passing visits from a travelling *menagerie*, or a dancing bear, ridden, perhaps, by an ape, or by such a *show* as is described in 'Harry and Lucy,' when an elephant was on view

for a week, between the hours of twelve and three, 'to any person who would pay a shilling apiece for seeing it.' A 'View of the Ostrich and Cassowary' might also be obtained, or a 'Peep at the Rhinoceros,' and 'Visits' could be paid to the 'Zebra,' and to the 'Bison, or Wild Ox,' while Londoners could see stuffed wild beasts at the Bullock Museum in Piccadilly, or live ones in the Royal Menagerie in the Strand, but in the main 'little Tarry-at-Home travellers' were dependent for their knowledge of the outside world on such illustrated books as Isaac Taylor's duodecimo volumes of *Scenes from Asia*, or *Scenes from Africa*, with maps and 'finely coloured engravings.' The scrapbooks have coloured prints of 'the Lion Roused' by a Rattlesnake, the Hyæna seized by a Boa Constrictor, the Leopard, the Tiger, the Wild Cat, the Elephant, with his native *mahout*, the Camel, richly caparisoned, led by a negro boy, the Buffalo and the Elk, the 'Sea Horse, or Walrus,' and the 'Ba-boon,' with a series showing Arabs hunting ostriches, Tartars chasing deer, and African natives hunting crocodiles, harpooning a shark, or killing an elephant. Here, too, 'sketched from the life by John Field,' is 'the Giraffe or Cameleopardis Sent as a Present from the Pacha of Egypt to His Majesty the King of England. Landed at the Duchy of Lancaster Wharf, Waterloo Bridge, August 1827.'

The bloodthirstiness of these pictures would hardly shock the sensibility of those born sportsmen, *feras consumere nati*, as Fielding has it, the children of the English rural gentry. The vivid tropical scenery and the exciting incidents would, indeed, bring a thrill of adventure into the unruffled calm of a secluded childhood. Yet for all the savagery of its 'blood-sports,' and the ruthlessness of its Game Laws, the age of Blake and Charles Lamb, of Sydney Smith and William Wilberforce, was not wanting in humanitarian sentiment. Though there are few traces of organised instruction, religious or secular, in the scrapbooks, a vein of simple piety and good-feeling runs through them. 'Little Girls' in white night-caps are seen 'saying Prayers before going to Bed' in a curtained four-poster. Brother and sister sing hymns and read the Bible together. Family affection is expressed in the small services rendered by children to their elders, and in the care of parents for their children. Pity is evoked for the 'Poor Little Sweep,' and for the 'Negro Slave,' toiling in chains. Charles Lamb's lines on Henry Meyer's picture of 'The Catechist,' a 'Christian child' teaching a 'tawny Ethiop' to pray, are printed beneath a good

reproduction of the painting, engraved by the painter himself, in the year 1827. 'Early Charity,' 'Always be kind to the Aged and Blind,' run the headings to prints of 'Little Master' giving alms to needy beggars. 'The Greedy Child,' devouring a large pie and refusing help to a tattered lavender-seller, contrasts with the 'Good-natured Boy,' forsaking bat and ball to fill a small girl's basket with fruit. 'I must never Play till I have learned my Lesson,' says the industrious boy to the idle one, who, his book thrown on the ground, prepares to fly his star-spangled kite. In these prints, effect follows cause with admirable promptitude. Deliberate cruelty to animals entails a sound thrashing. 'Children should Never Play with Knives' is the moral pointed by a stern grandmother, as she deals with a cut finger. If you upset boiling water, you are scalded; if you go too near the river, you fall in; if you steal apples, you are branded as a 'wicked boy,' and there are gruesome man-traps, set for the express purpose of catching thieves. But on the whole virtue is triumphant, and the pain of chastisement is forgotten in the pleasure of forgiveness.

The first half of the nineteenth century was an experimental and constructive period in the history of education, when a spate of informative literature flooded English middle-class society. Home education, by parents, tutors and governesses, was usual in well-to-do families, especially with girls and young children. The scrapbooks suggest that girls were taught to play the harp and the piano, to draw, and to write journals, and that boys, like 'Alfred, the young Artist,' learnt to draw from nature or from casts, or, like 'William,' to play the flute 'prettily.' These books were made, however, it must be remembered, for the amusement and instruction of very small children, and they abound in specimens of many ingenious methods of visualising the elements of knowledge, and making reading easy, as Locke says, by 'cozening' children into 'a Knowledge of the Letters.' The rhyming alphabet still kept its ancient fame. 'The Bouncing B' was the sign of a bookseller in Shoe Lane in the late eighteenth century, and the 'Great A and bouncing B' alphabet could be bought for twopence, 'gilt.' In the early nineteenth century many series of tiny prints were published, designed to teach the alphabet to little children, and in elementary schools. 'Some children,' said the father of Maria Edgeworth's 'delectable Rosamund,' 'particularly some of the poorer classes, are taught their letters in picture books . . . where to each letter of the alphabet, a little *picture*, or properly



speaking, some print, is joined, and the thing represented usually begins with the letter to be taught, as A for *apple*, C for *cat*.' In the older of the two scrapbooks fragments are preserved from some fifteen different series of picture and rhyming alphabets. In some the 'thing represented' is explained by a single word, 'D' for 'Drum,' accompanied by a minute coloured print of the object described, or the subject of the picture may belong to a sequence of proper names, 'A' for 'Alexander'; of nationalities, 'B' for 'Bohemian'; or of animals and birds, 'A' for 'Ass,' 'G' for 'Goldfinch.' An attempt is sometimes made to convey the sound of the letter through a word or a picture. Thus under 'B' appears the word 'Bee,' under 'C' the word 'See,' and under 'I' 'High' ! In another series an eye stands for 'I,' and a jay for the letter 'J.' An interesting complete sheet of prints equates the sounds of the letters 'R,' 'S,' and 'X' with 'Arrow,' 'Ass,' and 'Axe,' and the sound of 'Y' with 'Weighing,' and fills up the page after Z with an ampersand, and prints of a blackbird, a parrot, and a man-cook !

Pre-eminent among these alphabet rhymes and jingles is the very old 'A was an Apple Pie.' Here, in gay little hand-coloured prints, rough, but lively, the story of the historic Pie, in its red earthenware dish, is set forth in due order. It is Grinned at and Jigged for by the boys G and J, and Kissed by the girl K ; a youthful Xenophon, in pseudo-Greek costume, retreats with it, and, finally, a cherubic Zephyr cools it for eating, rather late in the day, as it has already been Uncovered by U, Investigated by I, and Enjoyed by E. Another alphabet rhyme teaches, with the aid of small bright cuts, printed on coarse paper, that :

*G was a Gunner and always aim'd true,  
H stands for Huntsman and oft his horn blew.*

and that :

*O was an Oyster, and bred in the sea,  
P was a Parrot that perch'd on a tree.*

Or again, a more elaborate picture alphabet, represented by a solitary survival, obtains emphasis by the use of capital letters :

*An old woman with EGGS and an ELEPHANT see,  
Near the ERICA and lofty ELM tree.*

Though as early as 1826 William Darton was issuing a special series of *Children's Copper Plate Pictures*, the scrapbooks draw most of their material from general and miscellaneous sources. The older volume, in particular, owes much to a somewhat reckless destruction of children's books, many of them dating from the time of George the Third, but greatly as this destruction is to be regretted, it at least implies the popularity of the books which were destroyed, for only imperfect copies, which had been more or less read to pieces, would be relegated to the scrap-heap. This inference is borne out by the fairly frequent occurrence of duplicate prints, or of pictures from different editions of that prime favourite, *Mother Hubbard*. Among these 'scraps' are coloured prints from Mary Belson's *My Sister*, and from *The PARROT and the SCOLD*, and *The MONKEY who had seen the WORLD*, small wood-engravings showing the adventures of 'John Gilpin,' various series of 'Cries of London,' and scenes from the stories of *Sir Richard Whittington and his Cat*, *Puss in Boots*, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*, and the fairy horse that possessed 'the rare quality of eating only once a-week; and the still rarer, of knowing the past, the present and the future.' The Lilliputian volumes from which these illustrations have been cut were issued in great numbers by the enterprising publishers and booksellers of the later eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries. Such were the seven 'little books' which were bought for Emily Barton, of Mrs. Leicester's School, at 'the Juvenile Library in Skinner Street,' the 'two little books' of *Dialogues on the Microscope*, which Rosamund's mother bestowed on her as 'a mark of approbation,' and the 'seven handsome little volumes' in gilt bindings of the *Parent's Assistant* and *Sandford and Merton*, which Amelia Osborne purchased for Georgy at 'Darton's shop in St. Paul's Churchyard.' Such, also, was the 24mo. edition of *Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales*, published, with copperplates and a woodcut frontispiece by Bewick, 'for the amusement of all those Little Masters and Misses who by Duty to their Parents and Obedience to their Superiors aim at becoming Great Lords and Ladies.'

Charles Lamb, writing in 1802, deplored the banishment of 'all the old classics of the nursery' by 'Mrs. Barbauld's Stuff,' but *Mother Bunch* is frankly concerned with 'amusement' rather than with instruction, and in the struggle for ascendancy between 'fantastic visions' and 'useful knowledge' which marked the children's literature of the first quarter of the nineteenth century,

the triumph of the fairy-tale over the 'moral tale' was well assured by 1830, when the three-year-old owner of the scrapbooks was finding in their pictured pages the keys which opened to him the gates of the world of wonder and romance.

The very mystery of the unexplained prints and inadequate titles and captions must have lent them a fascination which would stir a child's fancy as 'Alice' was stirred by the 'peep of the passage' in Looking-Glass House: 'very like our passage as far as you can see, only you know it may be quite different beyond.' Who shall say what dreams of enchantment and adventure, of fun and frolic, have been woven round the undiscovered country 'beyond' these collections of stray scraps, crumbs from the tables of the Great Masters of Literature and Art?

The older scrapbook opens with a set of figures and groups cut from a sheet of characters, 'twopence coloured,' designed for a toy theatre: 'Sir Cravenpaunch,' 'Earl Douglas,' 'Page to Douglas,' 'Bowmen Shooting at Earl Douglas's Page for a traitor,' 'Richard, second dress.' What dramatic possibilities are here, and how rich in suggestion are the portraits of great actors in famous parts scattered through the second scrapbook! Charles Kemble in *Ivanhoe*, wearing full plate armour and a plumed helmet, Edmund Kean, 'in the Dress presented to and worn by him on the occasion of his being chosen a CHIEF and PRINCE of the HURON TRIBE of INDIANS by the name of ALANIENOUIDET' on Saturday, October 7, 1826, Macready as Hotspur, from the *Dramatic Gazette*, Madame Vestris as a Broom Girl, Miss M. Tree as Coelio in *Native Land*, and the boy player, 'Master Burke,' as 'Bluster Bubble,' 'Jack Ratline,' 'Master Socrates Camelion,' or 'Napoleon Buonaparte.'

The second scrapbook introduces 'Little Master' to Greek sculpture and Italian painting, to the English pictures of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Wilkie and Cosway, and to illustrated editions of the plays of Shakespeare and the novels of Sir Walter Scott. Its tattered pages are crowded with a fine confusion of steel engravings, mezzotints, coloured plates and early lithographs, in which serious and sentimental subjects alternate with garish caricatures, broadly humorous sketches, and picture riddles and conundrums. Delicate engravings and colour prints of Regency London, or of English country houses and market towns, mingle oddly with ponderous memorials to Princess Amelia and George the Third, and portraits of statesmen and generals, scholars, poets and divines. Historical episodes, sporting prints, and views of Irish and Welsh

scenery are interspersed with studies of still life, brightly painted flowers, birds and butterflies, soldiers in brilliant uniforms, and peasants in national costumes.

In their swift transitions and careless jumble of incongruous elements, both scrapbooks seem as irrational and incoherent as a dream. But dreamland leads to Wonderland, and a child's imagination needs but little external stimulus to enable it to create a fairy world of secret magic for itself. As I close the second book and put the two old volumes back in their oak chest, my own lost childhood lives once more, and behind it stretches a long vista of other childhoods, Victorian and Georgian. 'Little Master' and 'Little Miss,' Harry and Lucy, Rosamund and Godfrey, Sandford and Merton, come out of their dim past to join hands across the years with David Copperfield and Maggie Tulliver, 'Alice' and 'Jackanapes,' Peter Pan and Christopher Robin, and all the children who never grow up.

*In a Wonderland they lie,  
Dreaming as the days go by,  
Dreaming as the summers die.*

*Lewis Carroll, 'Through the Looking-Glass.'*

## THE RUNNING BROOKS.

- The Literary Career of Sir Joshua Reynolds* : Frederick Whaley Hilles (Cambridge University Press, 15s. n.).
- The Rule of Taste : From George I to George IV* . John Steegmann (Macmillan, 10s. 6d. n.).
- The Onke Begetter* : Ulric Nisbet (Longmans, 6s. n.).
- The Grand Old Man : A Gladstone Spectrum* . George Edinger and E. J. C. Neep (Methuen, 10s. 6d. n.).
- The Fortunes of Harriette* . Angela Thirkell (Hamish Hamilton, 10s. 6d. n.).
- Don Gypsy* : Walter Starkie, Litt.D. (Murray, 10s. 6d. n.).
- Wanderings in Yugoslavia* : Nora Alexander (Skeffington, 18s.).
- My Garden by the Sea* : R. A. Foster-Melliar (Bell, 6s. n.).
- Trent's Own Case* : E. C. Bentley and H. Warner Allen (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.).
- Strange Coast* . Liam Pawle (Lovat Dickson, 7s. 6d. n.).
- The Sea's a Thief* : R. M. Lockley (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.).
- Main Line West* : Paul Horgan (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.).

BASED largely on the Reynolds Manuscripts preserved in the Royal Academy, Professor Hilles's *The Literary Career of Sir Joshua Reynolds* is designed to present a single phase of Reynolds's life, a phase which, though relatively insignificant to the world at large, was by no means unimportant in the eyes of the great painter himself, for it was 'his ambition, particularly near the end of his life, to be considered an equally proficient writer.' The book is the fruit of much scholarship and careful research and throws an interesting light, not only upon the man himself and the literary friendships which he cultivated so assiduously, but also upon a subject that, as Professor Hilles points out, has hitherto received scant attention—how, as distinct from why, the famous Discourses were written. It contains in addition three valuable appendices, the last consisting of Reynolds's own account of his quarrel with the Royal Academy.

The name of Reynolds, both as painter and writer, naturally occurs also a considerable number of times in Mr. John Steegmann's fascinating volume, *The Rule of Taste*, in which his survey of 'the various changes in the arts of architecture, gardening and painting' that took place between the deaths of Wren and Kneller in 1723 and the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832 is couched in delightful literary style and makes very entertaining as well as instructive reading. Described by its author as an essay, the book covers a wide field, and is indeed a most illuminating and comprehensive

study of that system or 'Rule' which, during the Hanoverian period, governed the conceptions of correct 'Taste,' and of its political and social backgrounds.

Yet another lance has been broken by Mr. Ulric Nisbet in the crowded lists of controversy concerning the identity of the mysterious 'Mr. W. H.' of Shakespeare's Sonnets. *The Onlie Begetter* is a well-documented, eminently readable little book in which the author sets forth the claims of William Harbert of Red Castle, Montgomeryshire, to be the prototype of Shakespeare's 'beloved friend,' and, though it is difficult to say that he has actually proved his case, he has at any rate propounded a theory which wears a real air of probability. The only weak link in his chain of argument is the doubt as to whether this William Harbert and Shakespeare ever were together—though it is possible they may have been.

Many years ago Mr. Edward Gordon Craig, in one of his classic volumes on stage technique, suggested that a playwright before working out the detail of action and dialogue of his various scenes would be well advised to construct a mental colour-scheme symbolical of their emotional and dramatic content. Some such idea seems to have governed the structural plan-laying of Mr. George Edinger and Mr. E. J. C. Neep, authors of *The Grand Old Man*. For they have called their book 'A Gladstone Spectrum' and labelled each of its sections with an appropriate colour—a suggestive method, if perhaps less effective as applied to biographical narrative than to drama. As for the book itself, it gives a vigorous, lucid, often compelling presentation of a personality and a period. It is all done with an almost cinematic urgency and swiftness, easy to read, easy to visualise, and leaves a clear-cut impression of one in whom, in his old age, 'the new generation saw more than a man' and 'looked with wondering envy upon a character so mighty and so steadfast in belief.'

Those who read the letters of Harriette Wilson to Lord Byron which appeared, edited by Peter Quennell, in the CORNHILL for April 1935, will be specially interested by Mrs. Thirkell's *The Fortunes of Harriette*. Since Harriette's own Memoirs have found a place amongst the classics it is good that there should be a reminder of who Harriette Wilson was and of that fame which she so fully enjoyed. In this biography the authoress has wisely allowed Harriette to tell her own story as far as possible and refrained from weighing the propriety of her most remarkable career.

As one reads Professor Walter Starkie's vigorous, witty, bril-

liantly coloured account of his last year's journey, *Don Gypsy*, as a wandering minstrel through Barbary, Andalusia, and La Mancha, one is often in doubt whether his qualities as author, musician, or scholar deserve the highest tribute. Not that it really matters because it is the combination of all three which makes his book so vivid and memorable an experience. They are no 'tourist trophies' which Professor Starkie brings back from his travels, but records of genuine intimacy with gypsies, beggars, people of all sorts and conditions to whose every-day fellowship—and even 'blood brotherhood'—his own remarkable individuality as a man and acknowledged skill as a musician have admitted him. Here is life as the adventuring troubadours of all time have known it—gay or tragic, uncomfortable or carousing, wearying or inspired. But always life, not its picturesque similitude.

Mrs. Nora Alexander may also be accounted as one of those who travel not so much to see as to know, since in the course of her *Wanderings in Yugoslavia*—wanderings mostly on foot with one woman companion and a knapsack for luggage—she too came into actual contact with the peasant inhabitants of those regrettably little-known countries. For the two women, tramping the often lonely by-ways of Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro, Macedonia, and Dalmatia, were entertained by monks and mountain shepherds, talked with bandits and murderers, were invited to weddings, and even arrested for being in possession of a camera and an ear-phone. It is a lively, adventurous book, excellently illustrated, and contains, in addition to its entertaining narrative of personal experience, a great deal of historical and up-to-date information about some of the loveliest places in the world.

Mr. R. A. Foster-Melliar's *My Garden by the Sea* is about a garden as well as gardening, from which it may be understood that it is as much a source of delight for the layman as of technical wisdom for the experimenter faced with the particular circumstances implied in its title. A really charming book, humorous, sensitive, practical, and unsentimental.

Mr. E. C. Bentley has one point of resemblance with the late C. M. Doughty who visited Arabia in his youth, wrote by far the best book upon it that has ever appeared, and then retired to Theberton in Essex. In 1913 Mr. Bentley wrote 'Trent's Last Case,' which is, by universal consent, the best detective story ever written. For twenty-three years he has watched myriads of rivals with a tolerant, kindly smile, and now at last he has

broken his self-imposed silence, in company with Mr. H. Warner Allen whose specialist part in the new book may easily be divined, and has given us another detective story associated with Philip Trent. There must be many thousands who have felt impelled to buy and read the new book but are approaching it with trepidation, fearing lest their first love may be a little impaired by new adventure. These may rest assured. In *Trent's Own Case* we have the same Philip Trent, whimsical, charming, and brilliant, and it is not his fault if the mystery on which he finds himself engaged has not quite the charm or the unique distinction that surrounded the murder of Sigsbee Manderson. For one reader at any rate the interest of the story lay rather in the investigation than in the identification; and there is no Mr. Cupples. But it is splendidly written and holds the interest from first to last. 'Trent's Last Case' stands in a class by itself: *Trent's Own Case* is a great deal better than almost anybody else has written.

*Strange Coast*, by Liam Pawle (a *nom-de-plume* covering the identity of two people—is one of them a woman?), is an unusually successful combination of melodrama and realism often satirically and always vividly woven into an exciting tale of international finance, a tragic revolt against the Soviet administration in Meskhia, and the star-doomed love-story of a beautiful Englishwoman and the picturesque royal leader of the revolution.

*The Sea's a Thief*, by R. M. Lockley, has the less spectacular, but finely drawn, background of a Pembrokeshire fishing-village and the instinctive rivalry between the love of the women for the land and of their menfolk for the sea. It is a simple story, warm and moving in its traditional colour and sentiment, written to the beat of a recurring rhythm as significant and relentless as the ebb and flow of the tides.

As for Mr. Paul Horgan's *Main Line West*—whose 'No Quarter Given' won him so distinctive a place in the ranks of contemporary American novelists—it is, one hopes, only the opening volume of the story of Danny, child of a travelling salesman and his deserted wife whose pacifist appeals in the course of her war-time preaching as an itinerant evangelist result in her death. It is an extraordinarily vital book, quiet, restrained, and beautifully toned, the sort of book that makes one wonder suddenly, long after reading it, what the people in it are doing—the work of a fine technician whose skill in the arts of selection and elimination is one of the strongest weapons of his creative power.



# THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 153.

THE EDITOR of the CORNHILL offers two prizes of books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue, to the two solvers of the Literary Acrostic whose letters are opened first. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must contain the Coupon from page v of the preliminary pages of this issue. They must reach the Editor by the 25th July.

' the turtle saw his right  
Flaming in the phoenix' sight;  
—— was the —— mine.'

1. 'To-night retired, the queen of heaven  
    With young ——(n) stays,  
    And now to Hesper it is given  
    Awhile to rule the vacant sky.'
2. 'Out upon ——, I have loved  
    Three whole days together!'
3. 'Beauty is ——, —— beauty,—that is all  
    Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.'
4. '—— loathed Melancholy'
5. '—— let the Fancy roam,'
6. 'Although a subtler Sphinx renew  
    —— of death Thebes never knew.'

Answer to Acrostic 151, May number: 'Full many a gem of *PUREST* ray  
*SERENE* (Gray's 'Elegy'). 1. *ProgresS* (Gray: 'The Progress of Poetry').  
2. *UsE* (Keats: 'Fancy'). 3. *RangeR* (Walter Scott 'Brignall Banks')  
4. *ElsE* (Wordsworth: 'Perfect Woman'). 5. *StygiaN* (Landor: 'Dirce').  
6. *TwicE* (Coleridge: 'Kubla Khan').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Mrs. Willingham Rawnsley, Godalming, and G. F. Allen, Esq., 22 St. Mary's Crescent, Isleworth. These two solvers are invited to choose books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue.

THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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AUGUST 1936.

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JOSEPH CONRAD—TWELVE YEARS AFTER.

BY RICHARD COLENUTT.

JOSEPH CONRAD passed from us on 3rd August, 1924. He was then in his sixty-seventh year. When he looked back to his childhood in Poland, his life must surely have appeared to him a full one and, as he might perhaps himself have expressed it, 'not altogether unproductive.' His friends hoped and expected that he had still a number of years of creative activity before him ; but his strength, undermined by thirty years of neuralgic gout, collapsed rather suddenly after a heart attack.

When he died, his very high place in English literature was generally acknowledged by those best fitted to judge. Are we able, after the lapse of the comparatively few intervening years, to add anything useful to what was then said and written about him ? Does the perspective afforded by even twelve years' distance in time now cause us to modify to any important extent the views held about him while he was still actively at work ?

We should first, perhaps, take notice of the fact that Conrad has never been one of those writers to gain universal acceptance. He was unusually slow to gain recognition from more than a small, but discerning band of admirers, and when, after many years, a wider public at length discovered him, there were always some who made difficulties about him. That has continued until the present day. Furthermore, sufficient time has elapsed since his death for a fresh generation of young readers to come to years of discretion. It is right and natural that each succeeding wave of readers should seek its gods in its own generation, and be willing to concern itself only with what is really the best of that which has gone before.

The reasons for the differences of opinion about Conrad seem to lead us at once into the more intimate mysteries of his art. His first book, *Almayer's Folly*, appeared in 1894, so that the period over which his works were published occupied almost exactly thirty years. Born in Poland in 1857, he had taken up the life of a seaman at the age of eighteen, and for eighteen arduous years had sailed the oceans of the world in sailing ships and steamers,

first before the mast, then as officer, later still as master. While still at sea he had begun to write in a tentative way and, when his health broke down, he took up the profession of a writer.

During more than half of the thirty years of his literary period he was comparatively little known to the great majority of the reading public at a time when the names of Kipling, Wells, Bennett and Galsworthy were household words, not to mention a host of writers equally well known then, though perhaps less assured of permanence hereafter. But from the first Conrad had been 'spotted' by the people who really knew—by the best of the critics and, especially, by his brethren of the craft of the pen. If Spenser is the poets' poet, it can be said of Conrad more than of any other English writer that from the beginning he has been the novelists' novelist. He wrote to Arthur Symonds in 1911: 'You must not forget that you exist *pour les esprits d'élite*, which is the best sort of existence.' No truer word could have been said of Conrad himself. One has only to glance at his correspondence with the other writers to see what they thought of him. The list of his active correspondents includes Wells, Galsworthy, Bennett, W. H. Hudson, Stephen Crane, Sir Edmund Gosse, Cunningham Graham, Norman Douglas, Henry James, Ford Madox Ford, E. V. Lucas, Hugh Walpole, and many more. It is possible that one artist is naturally prone to appraise the work of his fellow-craftsmen more generously than is the professional critic. Yet surely in Conrad's case there is something very much more than friendly encouragement and commendation. It amounts to the recognition of mastery. Galsworthy could go so far as to say that 'he is the only writer of late years who will enrich English literature to any extent.'

It was *Chance*, published in 1912, which made Conrad known to a great many people who had never heard of him before; that is to say, years after the appearance of such masterpieces as *The Nigger of the Narcissus*, *Lord Jim*, *Nostromo*, and *The Mirror of the Sea*. This is really difficult to understand. For not only is *Chance* far from being Conrad's best work, but it is not even particularly easy to read. It is long and rambling. In it Conrad has carried to extreme lengths his method of employing eye-witnesses or commentators who, one after another, tell a portion of the tale, but who also interpose themselves between the reader and the principal characters.

I do not wish to underrate *Chance*. With a minimum of thematic

material Conrad has contrived in the persons of the lovers to fashion two characters who are both vital and convincing. Indeed, Flora de Barral is the most convincing of all his women. And how trite the whole story might have been in less capable hands. The only reason for mentioning *Chance* at all is because with its publication Conrad's popularity immediately increased vastly. The explanation usually given is that it is a love story. But this will hardly do alone, for much the same could have been said with equal truth about some of his earlier works. Whatever the explanation, *Chance* marked a great extension of Conrad's public. Thereafter, both his popularity and his reputation increased steadily until his death.

Yet there were always doubters, and since his death the doubters have sometimes been very outspoken. Indeed, 'doubters' hardly expresses with sufficient force what is sometimes direct opposition. A year or two ago I read the opinion of a critic—I imagine a very young one—who tried to maintain that Conrad's only real claim to attention was his ability to depict tropical scenery and conditions of weather. He even went on to argue that it practically resolved itself into writing about the weather at sea, and that after a short time that sort of thing became very dull. Which would be true enough if the premises were correct.

For some time past the present writer has felt bound to recognise that there are two quite distinct and contradictory views about Conrad. On the one side are those who are inclined to see in him the greatest writer in English prose of our century, one whom Germans would include under the term *Dichter*. On the other are those who think, not only that his work is dead already, but that it never really ever came to life; like our friend of the 'weather' criticisms.

A young lady, a university graduate, came to the present writer once and said: 'You know, I feel it is a terrible admission, but I simply can't read Conrad at all.' I thought at one time the explanation might be that he appealed more to men than to women. But not long afterwards a relative, an old lady over seventy, read *Nostromo* and *Victory* straight off, one after the other, not only without difficulty but obviously with the greatest enjoyment. Such divergences of opinion must have some basis. Is any reasonable explanation possible? I think there is.

I suggest, first, that we have to acknowledge that Conrad's work is uneven in its quality, and this despite the fact that he him-

self always took the greatest pains with it. But he was temperamental in a way in which none of the other greater English writers of his time were. In the twentieth century no other literary spring wells up so bright and clear as Conrad's at its best. But there were times when the source seems troubled and the resultant flow confused and slow-moving. It is so with all writers, more or less. With Conrad the contrasts are great and obvious.

Bad health alone had much to do with it. In 1890 he had accepted an appointment on a small steamer far up the Congo. His health quickly broke down under the conditions and he was left for the rest of his life a victim to chronic neuralgic gout, which made existence an intermittent martyrdom. His letters abound with references to it and show the extent to which it affected him, in mind as well as in body. Quotations could be multiplied. The following is from a letter to Galsworthy (5th June, '09) after one of his bouts :

' . . . Well it was pretty bad ; the horrible depression worst of all. It is rather awful to lie helpless and think of the passing days, of the lost time. But the most cruel time is afterwards, when I crawl out of bed to sit before the table, take up the pen,—and have to fling it away in sheer despair of ever writing a line. And I've had thirteen years of it, if not more. Anyway, all my writing life. I think that in this light the fourteen vols. (up-to-date) are something of an achievement. But it's a poor consolation.

The way was long. The wind was cold,  
The minstrel was infernal old ;  
His harp, his sole remaining joy,  
Was stolen by an organ boy,—

That's how I feel.'

He might have added that he was at any rate keeping his courage, and not losing his sense of humour. Even when his health was good, to clothe ideas in words was always a struggle, a wrestling with difficulties. Like Beethoven's, his spirit travailed in creation, and this apart from any difficulties he may have had with the English language. From the spontaneous and ready way he expresses himself in his letters, it seems clear that the English language, as such, presented difficulties much less formidable than we might imagine, amazing as this is.

There is no doubt, further, that Conrad, even more than most artists, was affected by whether the subject was really congenial

or not. *The Mirror of the Sea* is such a delightful volume because Conrad is so evidently happy in writing of things he knows and loves. Some artists are singularly even in their work. Others vary between wide extremes. Conrad belonged to the latter; and so did Shakespeare, if he really wrote all that is printed over his name.

There is, however, a more important reason why some, even careful, readers do not 'get on' with Conrad. His technique of narration is frequently so complicated and round-about that some people are exasperated thereby. Conrad's mind, and his story, sometimes began at a point in time and space and worked forward in a straight line; and then his narrative is easy enough to follow—witness *The Nigger of the Narcissus* and *Youth*. Most story-tellers work forward like this and it is what we, as readers, are all accustomed to. But more often Conrad's mind, and also his narrative, begin at a point but spread outward in circles in all directions; like throwing a stone into a pool. That is to say, he ranges backwards and forwards in time and space without any obvious plan, although in the end everything fits together to complete a picture. The method, indeed, has the advantage that the final effect is more rounded, more solid, than the straightforward narrative would have been. It is indeed more like a piece of sculpture than a picture in the flat. Our own minds and memories function like that; but some people, perhaps those with specially neat and logical minds, find the process maddening when applied to literature, and it has probably lost Conrad many admirers.

It is worth while to examine the two methods a little more in detail.

As example of the former we may conveniently take *The Nigger of the Narcissus*. The ship is lying at Bombay, just about to begin her voyage. We are introduced to Mr. Baker, 'the model mate,' and to the hands; the ship sails, and we follow her adventurous voyage round the Cape till she reaches her destination at the London Docks. Structurally nothing could be simpler, and *The Nigger of the Narcissus* is one of the most beautifully artistic pieces of work in the whole range of English literature.

But there seems little doubt that the other method came more naturally to Conrad, and also that he felt it gave him much greater possibilities. It is well illustrated early in the volume of reminiscences which was eventually published under the title *A Personal Record*. He is discussing how he came to be a writer

and the circumstances in which his first book *Almayer's Folly* was written. At the moment when his reminiscences begin he is in his cabin on the steamer *Adowa*, which is lying alongside the quay at Rouen. He looks out of the port-hole :

'The round opening framed in its brass rim a fragment of the quays, with a row of casks ranged on the frozen ground and the tail-end of a great cart. A red-nosed carter in a blouse and a woollen nightcap leaned against the wheel. An idle, strolling custom-house guard, belted over his blue *capote*, had the air of being depressed by exposure to the weather and the monotony of official existence. The background of grimy houses found a place in the picture framed by my port-hole, across a wide stretch of paved quay, brown with frozen mud. The colouring was sombre, and the most conspicuous feature was a little *café* with curtained windows and a shabby front of white woodwork, corresponding with the squalor of these poorer quarters bordering the river.'

From the cabin of the *Adowa* Conrad then ranges backwards and forwards : how the ship came to be there, how he came to be on the ship, how he had come to begin writing *Almayer*, how he had met the original Almayer in the Malay Archipelago years before, his youth in Poland, how he had conceived the idea of being a sailor, and so on. It is pleasant, natural, reminiscent, go-as-you-please. There is no special order in the narration, but the final result is that we have a very complete and human document, and are left with a feeling of intimacy with the author and the varied circumstances surrounding the writing of his first book. Much more so, perhaps, than if he had begun with his youth and worked forward in sequential order.

That is the method he applies to himself, and he employs it also to delineate the greater characters in his fiction—Lord Jim, Nostromo, Heyst in *Victory*, the old sailor Peyrol in *The Rover*, Captain Mac Whirr in *Typhoon*, a whole host of other mariners, Dona Rita in *The Arrow of Gold*, Flora de Barral and Captain Anthony in *Chance*, and many more besides. In most of his greater stories Conrad combines with adventurous incident a very careful delineation of the chief characters, and this careful delineation generally precedes the main development of the plot. Consequently, when the story does begin to move more quickly, we have an intimate knowledge of the persons with whom we have to deal.

*Lord Jim* is the most typical example of this. The book falls

roughly into equal halves. During all the first part we are getting to know Jim and what is the matter with him. He has disgraced himself in the eyes of the world, but much more particularly in his own. It is essentially a psychological study. The second part, full of exciting incident, is the story of how he regains his self-respect. This part is essentially a tale of adventure. But the adventure gains immensely in significance and interest because we have learnt to know Jim so well, and the reasons which prompt his later actions. To discuss in detail the advantages and disadvantages of the method is hardly possible here. But at any rate we may note that it requires patience on the part of the reader.

With a small number of notable exceptions, Conrad needs time and a certain leisureliness to develop his theme. This explains why, to speak generally, he is so much greater as novelist than as short-story writer. In this he is the exact reverse of Kipling. Kipling, supreme in the short story, gets his tale going with amazing rapidity, but his characters for the most part remain types. That, however, is of minor importance in Kipling's chosen medium, the short story full of incident. Even Conrad's shorter pieces are seldom very short. Where Kipling has twelve to fifteen in a volume, Conrad has three to six. Some of the most successful, *Freya of the Seven Isles* for instance, are really condensed novels. *Youth* is of the same type exactly as *The Nigger* except that all the descriptions are very much shorter in *Youth*, and the number of characters reduced. Both describe a whole voyage full of incident. I take it that the typical short story of the Kipling variety is the elaboration of only a single incident, and that type Conrad achieves with success only rarely. The example which springs most readily to mind is *The Secret Sharer*, the story of an exciting occurrence which is supposed actually to have occurred on the *Cutty Sark*, one of the well-known tea clippers, when the Captain, for part of the voyage, successfully conceals in his cabin from his own crew a man accused of murder who had taken refuge with him just as the ship was sailing.

If we may revert again for a moment to that glimpse of the Rouen quay through the port-hole of the *Adowa*, we see in it a striking example of the photographic quality of Conrad's memory. A scene so visualised seems to have remained with him for always thereafter. The *Adowa* was at Rouen early in 1894. The *Reminiscences* appeared fifteen years later. Yet there it all is, the row of casks, the carter's red nose and nightcap, the custom-house



guard with his belt, the little *café*. How many of us can even remember what we saw when we looked out of the window last month?

We are fortunate in the careful work done by Conrad's biographers, Richard Curle and G. Jean Aubry, who, partly with his own assistance, have tracked down most of the major episodes in his books to the corresponding experiences in his own life. It is apparent how very greatly the writer drew on the personal recollections of the man, especially of the mariner. A particular scene, a particular individual impressed itself on his mind's eye, and twenty or thirty years afterwards the picture would come to life as a piece of literature, full of colour and detail.

Looking with fresh minds at Conrad's work as a whole, we see that his achievement is immense. Firstly, he possesses that indefinable quality, *Size*. There is a certain sheer massiveness about Conrad's work in the same way that there is about the sculptures of Michael Angelo or the choral works of Bach. That his work is frequently rugged does not matter any more than it matters with Rodin.

It is impossible to define this quality of size. It marks off the great masters from others who are good artists. As to whether any particular artist has it or not must be entirely a matter of opinion. Some will deny it to Conrad. I submit, with all deference, that four at least of Conrad's novels exhibit this quality in a way in which hardly any other novels written in English during the twentieth century do. They are: *Nostromo*, *Lord Jim*, *Victory* and *The Rescue*. With regard to the first two, one can go even further, in my opinion, and say that in this particular quality of size no other novels yet written in this century come up to them.

I submit next that in this period no other novelist has been equally successful in combining profound study of character with dramatic adventure. Mr. T. S. Eliot in an illuminating essay, *Dickens and Wilkie Collins*, points out that the dramatic novelists of the nineteenth century combined into one book various strands—adventure or even melodrama, character study, low comedy. Shakespeare did the same in his plays. In the twentieth century it is usual for these to be separated and for individual writers to deal with only one at a time. So we have either detective stories and thrillers, or high-brow character studies, or definitely humorous novels. With Conrad we cannot say that either character or action is the more important. He has told us that it is the *motives* of

action which interest him most, and these depend on character. In this way his books are more complete than those of the novelists who specialise in one aspect. And this in spite of the absence of knock-about fun of the Dickens type, though his books are far from lacking in sly humour. There is, however, no comparison between Conrad and Dickens in their fidelity to truth in the matter of character delineation.

Another aspect of Conrad's work is closely connected with the idea of size, and that is the expression of Force. There is a quality about much of his work which can only be expressed by the word 'terrific.' This applies to nearly the whole of *Nostromo*. It is the story of a revolution in a South American republic with a silver-mine in the background, which more and more dominates the fate of the revolution and the destinies and morals of the individuals. To read *Nostromo* is vicariously to live through that revolution, with its hopes and fears, its cruelties and feverish suspense. In comparison, the majority of detective stories and so-called thrillers are the merest milk and water, pap for flappers or bored railway travellers. They are harmless because incredible. But *Nostromo* is utterly credible, and the intensity of its effects is shattering—at least, that is its result on many people. In the last section of the book the storm has subsided and the waters are less troubled, but there are earlier parts to which little in English literature can be compared since Shakespeare's greater tragedies.

Such passages of extreme intensity are not rare in Conrad. The end of *Lord Jim*, the end of *Victory*, the blowing up of the magazine ship in *The Rescue*, the terrific scene in *The Arrow of Gold*, with the armed and raging maniac outside the room where the lovers are together, Willems' death in *An Outcast of the Islands*, these are a few examples which come readily to mind. A splendid one is that thrilling passage in *Chance* where the two sailing ships are in instant danger of collision at night. One has the full force of half a gale behind her, while on the other those on watch suddenly realise that they have not been seen and that in a few moments they will be run down. The first signal splutters and goes out. Then the mate runs down to find and light the flare. But his hands are cold and damp. One match after another goes out. How we curse those matches! At last the flare is lit—just in time. The ship is seen, and the other, a magnificent vision under full sail, goes flying past before the wind. Is there any reader so cold who does not heave a sigh of relief when the tension is at last relaxed?

The atmosphere of glamour which pervades so much of Conrad's descriptive writing has often been discussed. It is less definable than the tension we have just referred to and is all-pervasive in Conrad's work. Many passages have already become classical where this impression of seeing the world through a halo of enchantment is more especially notable. One of the best known occurs near the end of *Youth* where the young second mate wakes up in the life-boat to get his first view of the East.

Conrad would seem not only to have seen the world with a very retentive memory, but also himself to have seen places, people and events with a special zest and wonder. It is his ability to transfer these feelings to paper which lends that peculiar Conradian glamour to his narrative. In his earliest volumes, *Almayer* and *The Outcast*, it is sometimes overdone. The adjectives are piled one on the other in almost embarrassing profusion, just as a young composer, determined to obtain certain effects, might in his earliest compositions overdo the brass or the drums. But Conrad is quickly out of the apprentice stage. His third long tale is that perfect work of art *The Nigger of the Narcissus*. He wrote greater works than this, judged by size, depth and intensity, but surely *The Nigger* for sheer artistry is flawless? And from the beginning to the end its pages seem invested with that intangible glamour which, without for one moment interfering with the reality of their everyday existence, seems to invest sea and sky, ship and men with a kind of ethereal quality, separating them from, and lifting them out of the ordinary scheme of things.

Still more is this the case with *The Rescue*, in this sense the most magical of all Conrad's books. Personal likes and dislikes must inevitably influence opinion, but I cannot help feeling that many critics are inclined to do less than justice to this work compared with some of his others. It has not the intensity of *Nostromo* or *Victory*, nor the profundity of *Lord Jim*, yet it seems to me to excel all his other works in atmosphere. It is the story of a passion rising spontaneously between Tom Lingard, the independent and adventurous commander of a brig, and the wife of a wealthy yachtsman cruising in the Malay Archipelago. The yacht goes aground under circumstances to cause Lingard extreme inconvenience, not to say danger. For he is involved in native plots and politics ashore, and, at a most inauspicious moment, finds himself called upon to assist these strangers. The natural fascination of the tropic seas and coasts are in themselves conducive to

this magical feeling, and Conrad has contrived to weave into this background a spirited story of love and intrigue. It is true that some of the lesser characters are not very decisively drawn and that the plot lacks definiteness, yet the spaciousness of *The Rescue*, and its atmosphere of glamour, make it one of the pleasantest of all Conrad's books to pick up and open anywhere at any time.

This peculiar atmosphere of glamour is not identical with fine writing, though frequently allied with it. For splendour of style no anthology of English prose could now be complete without some passages from Conrad, whatever other modern authors were omitted. For sheer poetic beauty, imagination and the magic of rhythm I cannot myself see that any other modern writer has anything comparable to offer. That this supreme exponent of written English should not have learnt our language until after he was grown up is a miracle which is almost incomprehensible.

He struck this vein of gold at once. Lest it be thought that his greatest powers of descriptive writing were only called forth by winds or weather, let us take as example the description of the slave from *Almayer's Folly*, his first book :

'Taminah walked on, her tray on the head, her eyes fixed on the ground. From the open doors of the houses were heard, as she passed, friendly calls inviting her within for business purposes, but she never heeded them, neglecting her sales in the preoccupation of intense thinking. . . . In that supple figure straight as an arrow, so graceful and free in its walk, behind those soft eyes that spoke of nothing but of unconscious resignation, there slept all feelings and all passions, all hopes and all fears, the curse of life and the consolation of death. And she knew nothing of it all. She lived like the tall palms amongst whom she was passing now, seeking the light, desiring the sunshine, fearing the storm, unconscious of either. The slave had no hope, and knew of no change. She knew of no other sky, no other water, no other forest, no other world, no other life. She had no wish, no hope, no love, no fear except of a blow, and no vivid feeling but that of occasional hunger, which was seldom, for Bulangi was rich and rice was plentiful in the solitary house in his clearing. The absence of pain and hunger was her happiness, and when she felt unhappy she was simply tired, more than usual, after the day's labour. Then in the hot nights of the south-west monsoon she slept dreamlessly under the bright stars on the platform built outside the house and over the river.'

Here we seem to have the result of one of those photographic

images which had left a permanent impression on the writer's mind—a vision seen many years earlier, and very likely only for a fleeting moment. But what he gives us long afterwards is not merely the external picture of that simple slave girl but, in a few lines, her daily life and what she is in herself.

And that gives us the key to Conrad's greatness. It is essentially that of the spirit which can enter into and understand the minds and hearts of others, their joys and fears, and try to penetrate the motives of their thoughts and actions, be they good, bad or indifferent. Jean Aubry has summed it all up in a very fine line at the conclusion of his life of Conrad. I take leave to quote it here. He speaks of him as 'one who was an artist in the great manner, and a man strong in soul.'

*Berlin.*

### THE CHASTENING.

SHE will do anything for me :  
 So she says. I'll not believe her ;  
 Those quick lips of hers deceive her.  
 They so mobile, changeful so,  
 Steady to one man's mouth to grow ?  
                   Ah, no ;  
 I would not they should try to be.

Yet still to keep them, even for this,  
 That when they are tired with kissing,  
 When they quiver, maybe missing  
 That repose and quiet reign,  
 Lost, sold, and craved to have again  
                   In vain,  
 Mine may come something not amiss.

C. S. SHERRINGTON.

## GHOSTS OF OLD PEKING.

BY DANIELE VARÈ.

IN my Life of the Dowager Empress of China, Tzu-hsi,<sup>1</sup> when describing the Boxer rebellion and the siege of the Legations, I lingered over an episode that occurred in the Winter Palace, towards the end of June, 1900. In those days the Boxers were venting their rage on the Chinese converts to Christianity, whom they called the 'devil's disciples,' hunting them down like the Huguenots on the night of St. Bartholomew.

From the moment of their first entry into the Tartar City of Peking, the Boxers had attacked the Chinese Christians who lived round the Catholic church situated near the city gate called the Hata Men. The church and the surrounding houses were set on fire. The Boxers threw their victims into the burning building and pushed them back with their bayonets when they tried to escape. A few days later, many hundred Chinese converts were put to death outside Prince Chuang's palace.

The Emperor Kuang-hsu was suspected of sympathising with the foreigners, and with the 'devil's disciples.' He was Emperor only in name, as the formidable Dowager Empress had seized the reins of power in a *coup d'état*, in 1898. The Boxer chiefs were determined to make their power felt even within the sacred precincts of the Forbidden City. So it happened that, on the 26th of June, a group of sixty Boxers, led by Princes Tuan and Chuang, marched into the palace itself, in search of fresh victims.

When they reached the courtyard on to which opened the Emperor's pavilion, they began shouting for him to come out. It was about six o'clock in the morning, and in the pavilion opposite the Empress Tzu-hsi was having her early tea. She heard the crowd approaching and the shouts of the Boxer soldiery clamouring to kill. Without a moment's hesitation, she went out to meet them, and stood alone, at the top of a flight of steps, her slim figure in its embroidered robes showing in strong relief against the darkness of the doors that were open behind her. By that time the courtyard

<sup>1</sup> *The Last of the Empresses*, and the passing from the Old China to the New. Published in England by John Murray, and in U.S.A. by Doubleday Doran and Co.

was swarming with armed men, filled with the lust of animals who have tasted blood.

The Empress looked down upon them and her steady gaze met that of Prince Tuan, whose jaw dropped and whose knees shook beneath him. He had always been afraid of the Empress. Then she began to speak.

She did not raise her voice ; she did not bluster or threaten. Her words betrayed no fear and no anger ; only an icy, measureless disdain. She asked if Prince Tuan had come to look upon himself as Emperor : ‘ If not, how dare he behave in this reckless and insolent manner ? She would have him know that she alone had power to create and to depose the Sovereign. If he and his fellow princes thought that, because the state was at a crisis of confusion, they could follow their own inclinations, they would find themselves seriously mistaken. She bade them depart and refrain from ever again entering the palace precincts, except when summoned to her presence on duty. But they would first prostrate themselves and ask His Majesty’s pardon for their insolent behaviour. As a slight punishment for their offences, she further commanded that the Princes be mulcted of a year’s allowances. As to the Boxer chiefs, who had dared to create this uproar in her hearing, they should be decapitated on the spot.’

At this point she looked round towards her eunuchs, who stood by half-hidden among the lacquer columns. And she signed to them to fetch the guards from the outer gates. The eunuchs dropped on one knee as they received the order and then hurried off on their errand. The Empress turned and passed back through the doors whence she had come. The Princes, who had borne themselves with so much pride a few moments before, slunk away without a word.

Tzu-hsi had quelled a riot, by sheer force of character and by the prestige of her dominant personality. It was no mere bluff that made her speak as she did, and calmly order men to punishment, when any one of them might have felled her to the ground. She never doubted that it was for her to command and that she would be obeyed. China can boast of many great rulers, but none knew better than this Empress how to impose her will. In that brief imperious speech from the courtyard steps there breathed the voice of old Asiatic conquerors : of Gengiz Khan, of Kublai and of Tamerlane.

The danger had been greater than she knew. With the pretext

of seeking out the 'devil's disciples,' Prince Tuan and his followers meant to strike at the Son of Heaven. If they had attained their object, in those days of utter confusion, it would have been easy for armed men, who enjoyed the favour of the populace in their campaign against the foreigner, to have brushed aside the women and the eunuchs and to have seized the throne itself.

If only by reason of the contrast between the spheres in which they moved, the historic figure of the old Empress, quelling by sheer force of will the Boxer chiefs who had burst into the palace, is linked in my mind with the figure of another woman, who in those same days in Peking gave also proof of an unconscious heroism. And if, as the Chinese believe, the Tartar City has its ghosts, that come back to haunt the places they frequented on earth, then the two shades may meet, and perhaps understand one another, as in life they never could have done.

When my *Life of the Empress Tzu-hsi* was first published, there was still living in Peking a little Italian nun, Suor Vincenza, who had been in China more than forty years. Up till the day of her death, a short time ago, she was one of the few people still residing in Peking who remembered the Boxer rebellion. And whereas serious students of Chinese history will enumerate a whole series of psychological and economic reasons for that outbreak, Suor Vincenza had a more simple explanation. According to her, all the trouble was really nothing more than a contemporary manifestation of the ancient feud between St. Michael and the Devil. She told me her own experiences many times, and her narrative revealed the depth of her own religious faith, her courage, her kindness of heart, as well as a characteristic Neapolitan humour, that in her went hand-in-hand with the Christian virtues.

Now that she is dead and gone, I can write more freely of Suor Vincenza. Some of her remarks, had they been repeated when she was alive, might have got her into trouble. For the very sincerity of her faith made her speak of the Deity with a familiarity that fairly took one's breath away. From her conversation you would have thought that '*le bon Dieu*' (she spoke to me in French as often as in Italian) was somewhere in the back premises, and that He and she did not always see eye to eye on things in general.

I used to drop in often to see her in the little chemist's shop attached to the French hospital, and I remember once going in to condole with her after the death of a much younger nun, who used to help her in the pharmacy. Suor Vincenza looked at me over the top



of her spectacles, while she made up a prescription, and shook her head dolefully.

'She was a sweet character,' she said, 'and young and clever and pretty. Why could not I have been taken in her place? I am old and ugly and short-sighted. It is really hardly safe to leave me to do the work in the pharmacy. But *le bon Dieu* is like all other men. He likes them young!'

There is a Chinese expression that I always associate with one of Suor Vincenza's remarks. It is *mao ping*. One uses it to describe some porcelain vase, or plate, or cup that has some blemish, some small crack or fracture that diminishes its commercial value. One day, while I was waiting for Suor Vincenza to make me up a mouth-wash (to disinfect my mouth and throat, after going about Peking in a dust storm), a little woman entered from the glass door that opens on to the garden, and disappeared into the back premises. Probably she was on her way to see Doctor Bussièrè, primary of the French hospital. By the thick layer of paint on her face and by a certain exaggerated coquetry of her rather tawdry clothes, I guessed she must be an inmate of what we called 'the White House,' an establishment of ill fame, situated on the Austrian glacis.

In response to an enquiring glance from me, Suor Vincenza said:

'Oui. C'est une petite dame de la Maison Blanche. La pauvre! Elle est un peu *mao ping*!'

One could not have conveyed the idea more kindly, or with more precision.

It was to hear Suor Vincenza talk about Peking that I went so often to the chemist shop. And especially to listen to her experiences in the year of the siege.

In the spring of 1900 Suor Vincenza was looking after the pharmacy of the little mission of Cha-là, outside the walls of Peking, in the direction of the Summer Palace. When the situation began to appear dangerous, the Italian Minister, Marchese Salvago Raggi, advised the French Bishop, Monsignor Favier, to bring Suor Vincenza into the capital. Soon after she was recalled from Cha-là, together with the other nuns and some Marist Fathers. They all took refuge in the mission of the Pei-tang, inside the walls, at a distance of about three miles from the Legations.

Suor Vincenza's narrative begins with a visit which the Marchese Salvago Raggi paid to the French mission, a short time before the

siege began. In those days it was still possible (though dangerous) for foreigners to circulate in Peking. Baron von Ketteler had not yet been murdered.

‘ One day the Minister came with his secretary, Signor Gaetani [she meant Don Livio Caetani, son of the Duke of Sermoneta and elder brother to Don Gelasio Caetani, who was Italian Ambassador in Washington]. They asked me if there was anything that I wanted. I answered : “ A revolver.” Then Signor Gaetani gave me his own : a tiny pistol. But I said that I did not know how to use it. He was always so kind : he showed me how. And I fired off one or two shots. The Minister was very nervous. Probably he thought I was more dangerous than the Boxers. Also the Mother Superior seemed anxious and, to avoid accidents, she would not let me keep the pistol.

‘ Monsignor Favier still went almost daily to the Legations. Thanks to him and to the Ministers, it was decided to send a small detachment of sailors to the Pei-tang. On the first of June Monsignor Jarlin came with the Commandant Henri to look over our house and to choose the best points for the defence. Then they began to build barricades with doors, shutters and tables. They also made some loopholes, to shoot through. On the fifth of June the Italian sailors arrived. The Minister came, that same day, to see them. There were twelve of them. I was so happy because, after eleven years, I found myself once more among my own people. But my heart was sore, not knowing what might happen to all of us. Every night I said my prayers to our own Mother in Heaven, the Madonna of Pompei, and I asked that I might be killed rather than those poor boys ! ’

Among the political and military alliances that, in the last century or in this, united the armed forces of Italy and of France against a common foe, none marked a happier agreement than the brief alliance between a few French and Italian sailors, each commanded by a very young officer. Suor Vincenza spoke to me mostly about the Italians. But from her narrative (which she repeated to me more than once) there emerges also the figure of the French Lieutenant Henri, a man of serene courage and a fervent Catholic. To him the defence of a sacred edifice against the enemies of Christianity offered all the inspiration of a crusade. His Christian name was Paul. On the festival of St. Peter and St. Paul the Marist Fathers and the nuns expressed to him their best wishes. He thanked them and said :

‘I am sure that God will not let me die, as long as I can be of use in defending you.’

These words were sadly prophetic. Lieutenant Henri was killed only when the siege was drawing to an end.

‘The Italian Subaltern’—once more I quote Suor Vincenza—‘was Signor Olivieri, of Genoa. He was only twenty-two years old, but very serious-minded. All our sailors were much pleased to find two Italian nuns. Besides me, there was Suora Maria Graziani and Suor’ Angèle, who was Portuguese. We used to wait on the sailors at table. They had hardly sat down for their first meal when the children cried out: “*Tà tao kwi li-la!*” (“The Boxers are coming quickly”). The officers and the sailors caught up their rifles and ran out. Luckily we followed close on their heels, and Suora Maria called out to them not to shoot. They were not the Boxers, but our own Chinese servants returning home. They came very near being killed! And this happened more than once. A Mandarin, a friend of ours, came to see us. And the sailors caught him and tied him up. And he kept on repeating: “Catholic, Catholic!”’

Suor Vincenza held forth with pride about the fuss and bustle (for which she herself was primarily responsible) on the occasion of the Feast of St. Anthony. And all because she had discovered that Lieutenant Olivieri’s father’s name was Antonio! She appealed to the Marchese Salvago Raggi, and he sent her two big cakes and two bottles of champagne.

‘Signor Olivieri was very grateful for this attention (though he scolded me a little for troubling so many people on his account). Of the two cakes, he gave one to the sailors and one to the nuns, keeping only a small slice for himself. He shared the champagne with the sailors, and they drank to the health of the Minister and the Marchese Salvago, and to that of his own dear father.’

This was the last occasion on which some at least of the refugees at the Pei-tang enjoyed a little treat. Hunger soon made itself felt, as so many Chinese converts begged for protection. As long as there was any room it was not possible to deny them a refuge. Suor Vincenza found it quite natural that the nuns should have less to eat than the others (‘You see: we did not fight!’). She told me, as if the fact was really surprising, that she never felt the desire for choice foods, nor even for the familiar dishes of her own country. What she longed for and dreamt of was a big hunk of bread.

‘I said to myself: if ever I come out of this furnace, I will take my fill of bread. Only of bread!’

Her favourite story (how many times has she told it to me ?) was that about ' the miracle of the yellow hen.'

' Poor Signor Olivieri was in bed with a quinsy. And one of the Marist Fathers was dying. We had no food that either of them could eat : not a thing ! But the divine Providence came to our help. A yellow hen flew over the wall into our garden. The sailors caught it, and we made some chicken broth. With this we fed Signor Olivieri for two days.'

The greatest tragedy was the hunger of the children. Suor Vincenza said that after that experience she never felt young again. Sixty-six babies were entrusted to her care (she would carry them about, six at a time, in an open umbrella), and sixty-six died. No hope of saving even one !

As with the foreigners who were besieged in the Legations, the greatest torment to the refugees in the Pei-tang was the incessant noise of guns and explosions, of drums and gongs and bells. And their greatest cause of anxiety was the constant danger of fire.

During the more intense bombardments Suor Vincenza and the children would seek refuge in the cathedral. She often described to me the horror of those suffocating August nights ; the vitiated air inside the sacred edifice, so chock-full of Chinese ; the difficulty to find a place where one could lie down and rest one's head. And outside, the downpours of warm rain, alternating with the rain of bullets.

On the 12th of August, when the siege was drawing to its close, came the culminating episode in Suor Vincenza's recollections. As happened round the Legations, so it was at the Pei-tang : there was an intense and continuous underground struggle with mines and countermines. According to Suor Vincenza, five mines were exploded round the Pei-tang. The last one completely demolished the house in which Lieutenant Olivieri was living. This happened in the early morning, about half-past six.

At the moment of the explosion Suor Vincenza was at mass, which Father Girot was celebrating in the open air, on a big terrace. She ran at once to the house which had been destroyed, and feeling sure that Lieutenant Olivieri must be underneath the débris, she called for help in removing the fallen beams and rubbish. But everyone who came to her call pointed out that if somebody really had been buried under that mass of masonry, they must have been killed at once.

This is how Suor Vincenza told the story :

‘The Mother Superior said to me : “ Dear Suor Vincenza, do not build up false hopes. It is impossible that you should find Signor Olivieri alive. The Madonna will have granted to him the grace of a good death.”

‘But I answered : “ I *will* find him alive. And even if he is dead, the Madonna could resuscitate him.”

‘And the Mother Superior asked me : “ Was he worthy of a miracle ? ” But even while she spoke she was doing her best to help me, and so were the Marist Fathers. There was no one else near. They had all gone in search of the Italian sailors, who had been buried under the ruins a little distance off. We worked with difficulty, trying at least to make an opening in the débris, and we shouted with all our might. But all was silence. At last we managed to make an aperture large enough to push in an arm. I did so, but I could touch nothing, and no one answered. So we thought that Signor Olivieri might be elsewhere. One of the Marist Fathers told me that he had seen him in the first hours of the morning. He might be with his sailors. We decided to go and look. In passing we heard the cries of some women who were under the débris of a house near by. One of these was trying to get out, but she could not do so without help. The good Father Superior of the Marists ran to help her, but as he did so a bullet struck him in the chest. He had just time to begin the Act of Contrition. He finished it in Heaven. He was such a good and holy man ! I ran on. But when the French sailors saw me they called out : “ Ma sœur ! You are crazy to come here. At least, throw yourself on the ground ! Do you not see that the Boxers are firing on us ? With your white coif, you are an easy mark.”

‘I was out of my mind with the misery of it all. But I did as they told me, and crouched down on all fours like a dog. So I reached the place where my sailors were. But I could not see them. They were down at the bottom of a ditch and could not move. I asked if Signor Olivieri was there, and Roselli’s voice answered : no. Poor Roselli. He said : “ I have a beam pressing on my entrails. One arm and both legs are broken. I cannot move. Of the sailors who were with me I know nothing. I call them and they do not answer.”

‘It was not possible for me to remain there with Roselli. After exploding a mine, the Chinese would fire on the place for an hour or two. I had brought with me a bottle of chartreuse, and I managed to reach down and to give some to Roselli. I told him I would soon

come back. The French sailors succeeded in getting him out, about eleven, when the Boxers had stopped firing for a while.

‘I ran back to the house of Signor Olivieri, where I found the five Italian sailors who were still alive. And once more we began to pull away the beams and the rubble and the iron bars. Seventeen big beams had fallen from the floor above. After more than an hour’s work, we heard a voice, a groan ! What a moment ! “He is not dead. He is alive !” we shouted at one another. And at last we managed to uncover him. He was sitting on his bed, with his chin pressed against his knees, because of a heavy beam which weighed down on him. What had saved his life had been the mosquito curtain. The net was wound round his head and kept the dust from his face. But how had he been able to breathe down there, during an hour and a half or two hours ?

‘His first words were : “And the nuns ? Are there any victims among the nuns ? And my sailors ?”

‘We told him that all were safe. He was too weak as yet to be told the truth. The two Bishops came at once to see him and everyone hailed the miracle ! As a first restorative I gave him some of the chartreuse that I had given to Roselli. Signor Olivieri had only one small wound on his head, but he was racked with anxiety. The wall which separated us from the Boxers had fallen down, and they could have entered easily. But our Angels kept guard, and every day our Chinese Catholics, with fervent faith, used to sprinkle holy water on the ruins. And the Boxers never entered.’

*Rome.*

*THE SIRENS OF SILVERDAM.*

*AN INCIDENT OF THE BOER WAR.*

BY LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR TOM BRIDGES.

THE moon had set, but the stars were bright and clear and the little column moved steadily forward like a black snake across the grey veldt. The cool night air carried a hint of autumn and there was a fragrance abroad of some aromatic plant bruised beneath the horses' feet, the kind of scent that lingers somewhere in the brain long after sights and sounds have passed into oblivion. Men drew a deeper breath and the horses which had got their second wind sniffed it and sneezed joyously.

Such light-heartedness was an evidence of hard condition, for they had covered a good thirty miles since darkness set in, ambling and scrambling and tripping along at a fair five mile an hour. The night was far spent and already there was the faintest glow in the east heralding the 'Dutchman's Star,' the *voerloper* of the sun, and one thought was uppermost in every mind, not least no doubt in the equine: 'When on earth is that old Scottie going to halt?'

The long war was on the wane and a giant game of hide-and-seek was being played over the whole of South Africa. By day the vast expanse of the High Veldt would be empty save for a few solitary scouts, but by night columns of British and Boers would be hurrying eccentrically about the chess-board in desperate endeavour to outwit one another.

The grizzled Natal farmer who led this particular column had his own methods of protection on the march. He used no scouts, but rode three hundred yards ahead of his regiment, accompanied only by his 'after-rider,' a taciturn Basuto with cat's eyes and a dog's nose. By day Snowball would ride behind his master and aid him with his telescopic eyes, a guttural ejaculation and a pointing of the tongue at the horizon being his method of signalling 'Enemy in sight.' Examination with binoculars would reveal pins' heads moving along a ridge—the heads of men riding behind the skyline. By night his bump of locality was remarkable and

would often bring the column safely to its destination when white guides failed.

Several times they had changed direction in the darkness, but at last the two men came on what they sought: a few scattered thorn bushes which marked a deep donga. There was water at the bottom and with a celerity born of long practice the whole five hundred were soon safely off-saddled and camped twenty feet below the general level of the plain. The cape-carts were somehow lowered down, fires were lighted and coffee made. The order was passed round, 'Column will halt for the day. No fires after daylight.' A few experienced scouts were thrown out to guard against surprise and the Regiment of Very Irregular Light Horse settled down for a well-earned rest.

Riding in with the rear-guard, Lieutenant O'More was quite ready to camp. Five night marches in succession, added to outpost duties by day, were wearying to the flesh. The magic of the starlight and the scented air had ceased to charm and he was smitten with disgust at the monotony of his life. Having seen his troop disposed and his good roan cared for, he flung himself peevishly down with his head on his saddle looking up at the Southern Cross. Three o'clock by that overrated cockeyed constellation! He would have liked to put it up alongside the Great Bear. That *would* be a show up! God! How bored he was! Oh, for a drink! Oh, for a girl! Or even a fight! There had not been a scrap for months, only now and then the mild excitement of scooping up a few lousy prisoners. Oh Hell! Was the rotten war never going to end? For the hundredth time he wished gold had never been found in this god-forsaken wilderness.

So Terence O'More, lately promoted lieutenant and troop-leader. Twice before had he risen to this giddy rank, but each time some untoward incident had unseated him. The last time it was drink. That was at Ventersdorp. The time before it was drink at Potchefstroom. It must here be confessed that Terence could not hold his liquor. A wild medical student straight from Dublin, caught up in the war, his idea of a Great Time was inseparable from whisky and his total inability to hold it like an officer and a gentleman led to disastrous collisions with his dour and puritanical colonel. Sober, he was Nature's complete gentleman and a gallant soldier. Drunk, he slipped back a century and became an Irish patriot of the most sentimental and bellicose kind—in other words, a public nuisance. He would raise the keen for



hours over the ancient woes of Ireland and wake the camp by singing at the top of a stentorian voice, 'Who fears to speak of '98' or 'They're hanging men and women for the Wearing of the Green.' Or he would offer to fight 'any bloody English tyrant,' and call everyone a coward from the colonel down. Being as strong as a bull and one of the best Rugby forwards that ever took the field for Ireland, he was not easily subdued. But beyond these occasional outbreaks he was so doughty a fighter and such a general favourite that his lapses were wont to receive special treatment.

Coming out of the darkness, a man sat down, bushmanlike on his haunches, beside him.

'Hello, Dirck!' he said.

'Hello!' responded the other. 'Got a light?'

Terence produced matches, shaking the box to make sure there were matches inside. The other in his turn shook the box, lit his pipe, shook the box to show he had left some, returned the box to the owner, who shook it to make sure before returning it to his pocket. This ritual of the frontiersman completed and Dirck's big pipe alight, the silence was broken.

'Any news?' asked Terence.

'None,' said the other, 'except that old Scottie is ahead of the clock and we wait here for twenty-four hours to let the other columns get into position. Then we join hands and drive south.'

'God be praised for a rest,' exclaimed Terence. 'Any dorps about?'

'Not for a hundred miles,' said the other, 'but I used to know a farm called "Silverdam" which must be about eight miles away to the east and can't have been visited for a long time. No column has been up in this corner for a year.'

'Go and tell the old man,' said Terence, 'and ask him to let us go there to-morrow.'

Dirck Brand was thoughtful. He was a young Afrikaner lawyer practising in Johannesburg who had at the beginning of the war fought for the Boers and was now doing his best to end hostilities by performing the duties of guide and intelligence officer to the British. He had taken the oath of allegiance and was enrolled as a National Scout.

'I've got to be careful,' he said. 'If the Burghers catch me I shall be put up against the wall pretty quick.'

'We could take a patrol,' said Terence.

So it was agreed, and after drinking the excellent coffee which Dirck's Hottentot boy, Emilius, had prepared, they rolled up in their blankets and slept.

Morning light revealed a natural basin where the knee-haltered horses could roam in safety, protected by a few guards posted on the low ridges which almost surrounded it. It was an ideal spot for a day's halt and dispositions were made to give men and animals as much rest as possible in view of the strenuous operation in prospect for the morrow.

Colonel Macpherson doubted whether Dirck would find anything at the farm. It had probably been gone through and burnt and the people evacuated long ago. However, he gave him leave to take a few men and visit it.

Waiting until noon to give their horses a good rest and a feed, Dirck and Terence set out with an escort of half a dozen men under Troop-Sergeant Waby, a long-legged Queenslander. After an hour's ride to the east, Waby, who with another man was riding half a mile ahead, scrutinising the country from each rise before advancing across the open, sent his mate back to say the farm was in sight and inhabited. He was shortly seen to signal 'all clear' and the party joined him on an iron-stone *kopje* that overlooked the place. They took a careful survey of the farm through their binoculars, but could see no one about except a woman who occasionally appeared on the *stoep* and what seemed to be a Kaffir boy and some chickens. The party waited behind the ridge while Waby with his peculiar stock-rider's swing in the saddle loped down to investigate. He was seen to parley with two women in front of the house and then to wave with his hat for them to come on.

The farm was pleasantly situated by a dam and had a clump of willows, a row of eucalypti and a few pepper trees to give it shade. The surroundings were overgrown and neglected, but the old house itself appeared to be clean and tidy. It was solidly built of stone in the Dutch Renaissance style and was long and roomy and had evidently been added to several times; in fact the interior was a rabbit-warren of rooms.

The two girls who received them on the *stoep* were of very different types. The one who introduced herself as Katje De Villiers was slight and dark with a high colour and a bright eye. Her vivacity betokened her Huguenot stock. The other, Sannie Seepers, was the real Boer peasant, a strapping fair girl of about eighteen with pale-blue eyes, a broad good-humoured face and fine

teeth. Her hair was braided in two long flaxen plaits which made Terence think involuntarily of Brünhilde. Her great arms were bare and showed unusual strength; she could indeed lift a two-hundred-pound sack of mealies on to her back and carry it off. She wore a blue overall and white sunbonnet, while her cousin, Katje, who did the honours, was dressed in a tidy black frock with white frilling at the neck and wrists, no doubt hastily donned on the approach of strangers. The male of the party was a half-witted 'beiwoner' or poor relation, a lad of about seventeen left behind as useless for military purposes. He was introduced as Piet and stood hat in hand on one leg, scratching with the other. Terence and Dirck were invited into the shade of the verandah and a Kaffir brought out so-called coffee and *kekjes*, or home-made biscuits.

Terence had taken military precautions against surprise and his scouts had pushed well out from the farm in each direction to points where a good view could be obtained. There did not seem to be any signs of the enemy, though Sergeant Waby, leading the horses into the stone corral, noticed traces of recent equine occupation which he reported to Dirck.

'Yes,' replied Katje on interrogation. 'There were three Boers here passing through to the Bush Veldt a few days ago. No one we knew.'

Except for two Kaffir girls the only other occupant of the farm was Tantje Rosalba, Sannie's mother, who was in bed expecting a child.

'I should like to speak to her,' said Brand.

'You cannot possibly,' said Sannie; 'she is too ill.'

But Brand insisted that his duty bade him view the lady and in spite of Terence's chivalrous protests opened the door of a stuffy bedroom and peeped in, to be rewarded by the sight of a massive figure lying in the great family bed muffled in the bedclothes and surmounted by a mauve sunbonnet. Two sepulchral groans followed him from the room.

'Why don't you have a doctor?' he asked Sannie.

'It is difficult,' said the girl, shrugging her broad shoulders. 'Mama does not want to be evacuated to a concentration camp where women and children are dying like flies. She says she would rather die here and no doctor would come here, it is too far. But she is always having children and will never have the doctor.'

'Where are all the children?' asked Dirck.

‘Four are there,’ said Sannie, pointing to a little graveyard under the shade of the eucalypti. ‘Two are on commando, one was killed at Elandslaagte in Natal and one is a prisoner in St. Helena. My two other sisters are married in the Cape Colony.’

‘What a dispersion,’ thought Brand.

‘Here before the war,’ went on the girl, ‘we lived twenty or thirty in two or three families, but now all are gone and the house, as you see, except for this part is empty and shut up. There is nothing in it but a little furniture.’

They returned to the living-room where Terence was applying his blarney to Katje with some effect. The room was garishly but comfortably furnished. There was a piano that had not been tuned since the outbreak of the war and on the whitewashed walls were enlarged photos of the more important members of the family. Looking at these forbidding personalities Dirck suddenly exclaimed : ‘Surely that is Christian Brand ?’

‘Yes,’ said Katje, ‘do you know him ?’

‘Of course,’ said Dirck ; ‘he is my uncle.’ He stopped abruptly, wishing he had not spoken.

‘Then you are a Boer ?’ asked Katje.

‘I am, though my mother was English,’ he replied. ‘I fought the British for two years and now I am trying to end the war in the only possible way.’

There was an uncomfortable silence. The girls exchanged a quick glance.

‘Are you a Brand from Mooimesjesfontein ?’ asked Sannie.

‘Yes,’ said Dirck, ‘I was born there, but went to school at Cape Town quite young and then to College and have never been back. The homestead has been entirely destroyed.’

‘I know,’ said Katje, ‘by your new friends the English. Look ! You may find your name here.’

She opened the great family Bible which lay on the table. Brand looked with interest. The flyleaves contained a formidable chronicle of full quivers of De Villiers, Brands and Seepers dating from before the Great Trek, and amongst the moderns, sure enough, he found his own name, Dirck Cornelius Brand, born 1870—and those of all his family.

‘You see,’ said Katje, ‘we are cousins. Everyone is related in these parts.’

Dirck studied the pages for some time. There were not only the names but also a summary of what had happened to each

member of the family. Their temporary circumstances, such as 'on Commando,' 'in prison,' 'in Concentration Camp,' 'at St. Helena,' were carefully recorded in pencil; more permanent affairs, such as births, marriages and deaths, in ink. 'Killed in action' was registered in red ink. There were a great many of these. His own name was still followed by the remarks—Cape Town, College; lawyer, Witwatersrand; and then in pencil, 'op Kommando.'

'Katje,' he said, 'you had better not tell your Aunt Rosalba or anyone else who I am.'

Katje nodded.

'I hope,' continued Brand, 'you do not think too badly of me. I am convinced it was the right course to take. You must resign yourselves as I have done to the inevitable. In a very short time the last of the irreconcilable Burghers will be rounded up and this wretched business will be finished. There are many who have done as I in order to hasten the end.'

Katje changed the subject by asking for news of mutual friends and the conversation became general. More coffee was brought and so agreeably did the time pass for the two young men that the sun was low when they rose to take their leave.

Sergeant Waby who had been investigating produced some trusses of oat hay, a good supply of which he had found in the barn. He was attaching them to their saddles.

'That is for our poor cow,' said Sannie.

'There's plenty left,' said Waby. 'Where's the horse?' he asked quickly.

'We have no horse,' said the girls simultaneously.

'That's odd,' said Waby, 'for my Biddy smells horse somewhere.'

At his suggestion, he and Dirck took a walk round the premises. They were accompanied by the girls, who continued to protest that it was waste of time as the house and outhouses were empty. They had finished their examination of all the rooms and were returning to the *stoep* when Waby's Biddy, feeling lonely out in the corral, began to neigh and was answered from somewhere apparently within the house.

'Oho!' said Waby, 'horses in the Boudoir, eh?'

He went back and began knocking on the walls along the passage and soon was rewarded by a startled snort. Evidently a horse, but where was he? Walled up in an inner room without

windows and with a curtain hung to conceal the door, which had also been boarded up! The butt of a rifle speedily released him and brought to light a splendid startled chestnut with a blaze and four white feet, the kind the Dutch call 'Tollfree.' He was in good condition and well shod. His saddle and bridle lay beside him.

'Lucky there's no rifle,' said Brand. 'We would have had to take the people away and burn the place. Whose horse is this?' he asked.

'It is mine,' said Sannie. 'I ride and drive him. We must have something here in case of accidents or illness.'

'We hoped you would not find him,' added Katje. 'You will not surely take him? He is a pet, we have had him from a foal. He is our only means of communication with the world.'

The girls were urgent in their entreaties for the horse to be left with them, but this Brand was unable to grant. To begin with, he said, Waby was already on his back and no Australian was ever known to give up a horse once it was between his legs, and, secondly, orders on the subject were very strict. He would blind his eye to the cow and report that the family was not in a condition to be evacuated and should be allowed to remain where they were. For this concession the girls appeared very grateful. Again they exchanged a surreptitious glance and seemed to become even more friendly. Warm embraces indeed passed between Sannie and Terence, driving the latter, who had not kissed a girl for months, to a state bordering on frenzy. Katje's methods were less crude, but she too, by the look in her dark eyes and the subtle pressure of her hands, gave Dirck to understand how congenial she found his company.

When Waby, still mounted on the 'tollfree,' was leading their horses and his own Biddy up to the *stoep*, Katje said in a low voice, 'Why don't you both slip back alone and see us to-night? It is quite safe. There are no Burghers within thirty miles and we could have coffee and music.'

'Yes, do,' said Sannie. 'I think I can find some old "Cape Smoke,"<sup>1</sup> and we will have lots of fun.'

Terence accepted with alacrity, but the more prudent Brand saw difficulties and dangers.

'Many thanks,' he said, 'but I fear it will not be possible.'

And so they parted the best of friends, and calling in their

<sup>1</sup> Brandy.

scouts, the patrol cantered away over the plain. Before darkness set in they were back in the hidden valley that so unexpectedly held a waspish force of five hundred hard-bitten fighting men. Dirck reported to the Colonel with some reserve that the farm held nothing but one horse which they had confiscated, and a woman too sick to be moved, with two girls, a couple of Kaffirs and a half-wit '*beiwoner*' to look after her.

Neither Dirck nor Terence could keep their minds from dwelling on the charmers of Silverdam. Sitting smoking after their supper, Terence expiated on the rustic beauties of the encounter to the envy of his listeners. Dirck pulled at his pipe in silence. Before long they turned in and rolled over in their blankets. But Dirck could not sleep. His mind was stirred by Katje's dark beauty and the pressure of her little hand. She was of the same blood and he would have liked to see her again and to clear away any doubts she might feel as to his action in joining the British Forces. Terence was in no better case. He was whipped and tormented by Sannie's warm kisses and the hug of her great arms. Why throw away, he thought, what the Gods offer in this womanless war? Here was a chance that would not occur again. He sat up. The moon was high and the camp quiet. He noticed that his companion was awake.

'Dirck,' he said in a low voice, 'let's go and see those girls.'

Dirck turned round and stretched himself. He welcomed the idea, but he had misgivings as to the advisability of a second visit. The ardent and persuasive Terence set to work to overcome his scruples.

'All right,' he said at length, 'but move quietly.'

It was still only nine o'clock, and at the other end of the bivouac where Headquarters lay, they could see lights as the Colonel and his staff worked out their orders and made preparations for the coming drive. They could be back, thought Brand, soon after midnight and in this free-and-easy formation no questions would be asked.

With the help of Emilius they saddled their horses and led them quietly out at the far side of the donga. Giving their names to the sentry, 'Lieutenant O'More and Brand on special patrol,' and riding wide round the camp so as not to disturb Headquarters, they set their course for Silverdam. They passed the time of night with the outpost on the ridge as they went through and jogged along in silence, enjoying the night air and the feeling of adventure

sharpened by the unauthorised nature of the enterprise and the spice of danger that seasoned it. As they topped the rising ground which hid the farm, they saw a light in the shallow valley before them.

'Someone at home,' said Terence.

'Yes,' said Dirck. 'They are sitting up for us. I suppose it's all right, but Boer girls are pretty slim sometimes.'

'Oh,' said Terence, 'I'd bank on these two. I'll take the fair one, she's more my weight, and anyone can see your cousin is mad about you. We're in luck, Dirck. They're two damned nice girls to find hidden away like roses in the desert and they're just dying to be loved.'

While still two hundred yards away, he gave a reckless 'Whoop!' that brought two female figures out on to the *stoep*, one holding the lamp above her head. They quickly hitched their horses to the post outside the door and were led in and warmly greeted by their hostesses. The girls relieved Terence of his rifle and bandolier which they placed in a corner together with Dirck's belt and revolver, though the latter protested that he was used to carrying it.

'I can't love a man with a gun round his waist,' said Katje.

Terence, knowing the weakness of the Boers, produced from his saddlebags two tins of salmon, some chocolate and a loaf of white bread—all delicacies on the veldt. Coffee and cakes and the bottle of 'Cape Smoke' completed the feast in which the dribbling Piet joined hungrily.

After supper Piet produced an accordion which he played unexpectedly well and all joined in well-known choruses, English and Dutch. Terence no doubt imbibed more than enough of the powerful spirit and in the intervals of song tenderly embraced his innamorata, who responded to his caresses in no unwilling manner. Katje, if less demonstrative, was equally inviting, but Dirck did not feel quite at ease. He went out once to see if the horses were all right and listened to the stillness of the night. Katje followed him and, putting both arms round his neck, gave him a great warm kiss and whispering 'You must stay with me, Dirck. You shan't go away to-night,' brought him back into the living-room.

It was during Terence's soulful rendering of 'Believe me if all these endearing young charms' that Dirck again thought he heard sounds of restlessness on the part of their horses and again went out on to the *stoep* to investigate. Terence also rose from his seat, none too steady, still singing at the top of his fine baritone voice.



But the phrase 'Thou would still be adored as this moment thou art' died abruptly on his lips as he found himself suddenly seized from behind and his arms pinioned in a vice-like grip. He struggled madly, but even a great heave of the shoulders of the best forward in the Irish pack could not shake off his assailant, who he found to his rage and mortification was none other than the amazon Sannie, while Piet, the half-wit, with surprising deftness slipped a noose of ox-hide *reim* round his feet, bound them together and forced him back into his chair.

Terence yelled to Dirck. Too late! As the Afrikander turned quickly round he found himself looking into two brown eyes down the barrel of an English Smith-and-Wesson revolver, and he received a smart command from Katje: '*Hendsop.*' To complete their discomfiture, the door now opened and disclosed an apparition in a long and dingy nightgown surmounted by a mauve sunbonnet—the labouring Tantje Rosalba! Yes! But Tantje Rosalba with a great shaggy beard and a pair of fierce grey eyes alive with hate and an itching finger on the trigger of a Mauser rifle.

God! what fools they'd been! The struggle was soon over. Both men were rapidly and securely bound to chairs with the stout *reims* evidently ready to hand for the purpose. They were set side by side at the table, Sannie lifting her quondam lover, chair and all, as if he had been a baby.

'Be a good boy,' she said breathlessly, giving the outraged Terence a smacking kiss on the cheek. 'Keep quiet and you won't be hurt.'

Terence's reply was unprintable, but it evoked a great gust of laughter from the amazon's deep diaphragm. She then took the hurricane lantern out on to the verandah and swung it to and fro.

'A signal,' said Terence. 'We *are* in the soup.'

Katje, still holding the revolver, pushed the great Bible under Dirck's nose and in a new voice, a voice in which venom had taken the place of honey, said:

'Look! If you had happened to read that before you might not have stayed so long.' Instinctively his eyes searched for his own name. Yes, there it was:

Cornelius Dirck Brand.

But surely something had been added since their visit of the morning? After *op Kommando* was written in ink the word '*Verraaiër*' (Traitor), and then in pencil 'Condemned to death.'

Executed 20th March 1901.' The very date! Were these girls going to shoot him in cold blood? But as if reading his thoughts Katje said:

'You will be tried by Field Court Martial. Listen!' And there was triumph in her voice.

The sound of approaching horses and guttural voices outside left no doubt in his mind that they had been completely trapped by the guile of the two ingenuous maidens and again and again Dirck cursed his folly for returning to the farm against his better judgment.

Eight Boers now entered the room, rifles at the ready, and at their head a tall old man with reddish grizzled hair. Yes, it was General Paul Van Wyck, one of the most stubborn leaders left in the field, and with him another, Feld Cornet Lippen, both of whom, with their commandos, it was hoped to find in the net which would be drawn on the morrow.

Hearty greetings and handshakes all round took place, but no notice was taken of the prisoners until the girls had brought the inevitable coffee and they and Tantje Rosalba, who it transpired was Oom Jan, had told their story and been uproariously congratulated with much boisterous laughter and back-slapping on the slimness they had displayed in the capture. The story of how our Sannie had put her arm-lock on the big *rooinek* had to be told and re-told by the dribbling Piet, while the hirsute Oom Jan, still in his sunbonnet and dirty nightgown, described with graphic gusto the aspect of the hold-up when he arrived on the scene on the pre-arranged signal of Katje's cry of 'Hendsop!'

'A pretty tough crowd,' thought Terence. Even the youths had beards. Their clothes were deplorable. Most of them wore ragged coats and patched moleskin trousers. One old dopper sported rusty black broad-cloth and a battered top-hat which, supplemented by a Mauser rifle and two bandoliers, gave him a distinctly church militant appearance. Their foot-wear was mainly worn *veldschoen* of raw-hide except in a few cases where the British ammunition boot had made good the deficiency. But all were well armed and there was about them a look of alertness and physical vigour that caught the eye of a soldier and there was not a man among them but could have been picked to lead a forlorn hope.

Paul Van Wyck placed himself in front of the prisoners and raised his hand for silence. He doffed his tattered slouch hat with its deep crêpe band and began to pray: 'Onzer Vader.' The others uncovered their tousled heads and joined in with deep voices.

The General then sat down and Katje placed the great Book before him. Was it chance, Dirck wondered, that he opened it apparently at random at the Second Book of Kings and began to read in the majestic language of the Dutch Bible :

‘And Joram turned his hands and fled and said to Ahaziah  
“*There is treachery, O Ahaziah.*”’

Or had she put the long orange ribbon there on purpose ?

The reading over, a summary court martial was held on Dirck Brand. Several Burghers testified to his identity, including one of his own relations. He was asked if he had any defence. In reply he made a statement of the absolute hopelessness of the Boer cause supported by figures of numbers, arms, horses and material, and said that for a year already he had realised that no intervention from without was possible and that he had done all he could to bring about a general surrender of their dwindling forces. Failing that, he and others, an increasing number, who entirely disapproved of the continuance of the war and realised its futility, had gone over to the British to assist them to end a campaign which was now rapidly ruining the whole of South Africa. He maintained that their cause was lost and that those who remained in the field had been deceived by their leaders, the old backwood Boers, by false information into continuing the struggle.

Dirck was on his mettle. It was a reasoned and passionate pleading but seemed more directed towards moving his compatriots to surrender than to saving his own life. They might of course, he said, convict and execute him in this illegal manner, but he warned them by name (saying several of their names distinctly for O’More’s benefit) that the British Commander-in-Chief would hold them guilty of murder and they would certainly be hanged when caught and it could not be long before that happened. If they would all lay down their arms that night and come back with him to the column, they would be doing a greater service to their country and their families than by continuing a hopeless struggle that at best could scarcely last through the coming winter and which could only end one way. He spoke at much length, not only in his effort to convince his compatriots, but also in the hope of possible intervention from the column.

His words seemed to shake some of the younger members of the Court, but when after ten minutes’ guttural discussion the General put the question, all voted the prisoner guilty.

‘There is only one punishment for treachery,’ said the President,

‘and that is death. *Stem u saam?*’ (Are you all agreed?) He looked up fiercely.

‘Ya!’ All raised a hand save one—a handsome young Boer in a khaki coat. He was a cousin of Brand’s.

‘I do not agree,’ he said. ‘There is much in what he says. We can never win this war and no other nation will intervene.’

‘Then leave us,’ thundered the old man, ‘and go and look after the horses. Send De Water here.’

But De Water was already listening on the *stoep* and came in at once, raising his hand in ready condemnation. General Van Wyck turned and looked at the painted face of the ponderous Dutch clock in the corner.

‘Cornelius Dirck Brand,’ he said solemnly, ‘you will be shot at midnight. And may the Lord have mercy on your soul.’

‘Amen,’ said the assembly.

‘You have twenty minutes to say your prayers. The whole detachment will form the firing party under Feld Cornet Lippen.’

He stood up, put on his hat and lit his great pipe. Turning to Sannie he said :

‘You can keep your tame *rooinek* until dawn, then he can walk back and inform his friends of what has happened. Tell him to keep better company in future. Take them away and put them in separate rooms ; we have important matters to discuss.’

The helpless prisoners were carried out and put into different rooms and a burgher set on guard over each of them.

‘By God, Dirck,’ cried Terence who had understood the gist of the trial, ‘if they do this, I’ll never rest till every one of them has a rope round his neck.’

Dirck did not answer, his heart was too full. He had been trapped through his own folly in gratifying a selfish desire and had only himself to blame. Nor could he help seeing the logic of the old Boer’s point of view and he felt no enmity towards him : but to be condemned by his own countrymen and shot by them was a bitter fate.

And here standing on the brink of Eternity, we must leave him and return to the column lying in Rhenoster Vlei.

. . . . .

Sergeant Waby, after the habit of Australian bushmen, slept lightly and rose at intervals to tend his mare Biddy, the apple of his eye, if only to rub her nose, but more frequently to gather her a

few oat straws or the contents of some neglected nosebag, with the consequence that Biddy was wont to maintain her condition when other horses, even those of the officers, wilted away. On this occasion, he was surprised to find two horses in his troop missing and the process of elimination proved them to be those of Terence and Dirck. He went over to where the owners should have been sleeping, but found them gone with their saddles and arms. Now he knew that no man in the troop could go out on duty without his knowledge and suspicion dawned on him.

'Damn' fools,' he said, 'running their bloody heads into a net. I'll bet those Dutchmen ambush them.'

Something had to be done. His Troop Leader, who in any case he looked on as a mere passenger under his special guidance, was missing, so he decided to wake the Squadron Leader. This officer had been in the field with the regiment since the outbreak of war. Although a regular cavalry officer, he had early discovered that the only way to command irregulars was to know more than they did. His name was Marjoribanks, but he was nicknamed Potgieter, which was held to be easier, and Potts for short. Sergeant Waby without ceremony put his hand on the sleeper's arm.

'Hallo!' said Potts. 'What's up now?'

'Cap.,' said Waby, 'there's two men missing in my troop—that Lieutenant O'More and Dirck Brand the Bojer, who's attached. If you haven't sent them out, they're up to some game.'

'Not I!' said Potts, 'no duties found by C. Squadron to-night. Where do you think they've gone?'

Waby told him.

'There's a couple of girls at "Silverdam" they are after. Now I wouldn't give them away, Cap., but see, that place reeks of Bojers and if they haven't been stopping there in the last two days I'll eat my hat. There was a lot more biltong drying and mealie bags around than there should be. And that "tollfree," damned fine horse, shod and all and a good saddle. That wasn't left there for girls to ride. Likely as not they've run their heads into a ruddy hornet's nest by now.'

'What do you think we could do?' said Potts, who had a high opinion of the black-muzzled bushman and never hesitated to seek counsel from anyone he thought worth while.

'Take out the squadron at once and round up the farm. If there's no one there, it won't do any harm; we can halt there and join in the jamboree to-morrow. There's water in the dam. And

I'd send Brand back to Pretoria and get O'More put back in the ranks again—he's safer there. But I think we'll either find Bojers there or that they've got our two chaps and gone. I didn't like the look of that dark Jezebel, wouldn't trust her as far as I can throw a steer.'

Telling Waby to warn the other Troop Leaders to stand by, Potts hurried round to the Colonel and told him enough of the story to get his acquiescence. While thoroughly annoyed at the conduct of the truants, Colonel Macpherson saw a chance of making a capture.

'And listen, Marjoribanks,' he said. 'You know as well as I do, it's no good just riding into a farmhouse full of Boers. They're pretty cunning. The horses will give the alarm and they'll ride out as you ride in. You'll have to surround the place quietly, wide out, leave your horses and march in from all sides on foot. You can take the scout troop too. Give Dermot the far side and tell Francis and his boys to get hold of the Dutchmen's horses before the alarm is given. They'll see no one gets out alive.'

The moon was still high and within a quarter of an hour the scouts were already trailing out of the camp, in twos and threes according to their wont, followed by the more orderly squadron, while ahead galloped Sergeant Waby accompanied by the redoubtable frontiersman Dinwiddie and the lynx-eyed Snowball. Halting on the ridge, they sent the Basuto down on foot to investigate. He was soon back with his eyes goggling with excitement. 'Mabouna!' he said. 'Maybe a dozen. In the house and on the *stoep*. Horses in the corral.' Dermot jumped on his horse and rode back to warn Potts of the state of affairs. A hasty conference of officers was held and the Squadron Leader gave his orders for the surrounding of the farm. The flank detachments were to take no risks but were to ride in a two-mile circle until they met on the far side, then all would close in on the farm, dismounting at a thousand yards, and at 11.45 p.m. would march in on foot without noise. At the same hour half a dozen picked men, white and black, under Francis, a professional big-game hunter, would crawl up and occupy the corral to make sure the Boers could not get to their horses.

. . . . .

And so it transpired that when the ancient Dutch clock in the corner of the living-room struck midnight and the Burghers broke up their council of war and went to release Dirck from his chair and

bring him out for execution, a ring of Light Horsemen was already closing stealthily in on Silverdam from all sides. Panther-like, Francis the Hunter and his boys writhed their way along the edge of the dam into the walled enclosure amongst the horses, which had now been left unguarded as every member of the Boer party wanted to join in the discussion in the parlour.

The first alarm was given by the horses themselves, snorting at the influx of strangers. A Boer came out on the *stoep*.

'*Wer da ?*' he asked, and receiving no answer, walked up to the corral.

Francis, standing motionless, his head indistinguishable from the rough boulders of the wall, had him covered from the first. He let him come within ten yards, before saying in a low voice :

'Hands up ! You are surrounded.'

But the Boer yelled out, '*Pasop !* (Look out !), the *Rooineks !*' and rushed at him, crumpling up as Francis's deadly aim took effect.

Shouts and oaths issued from the house as the Boers seized their rifles and ran out to get their horses, only to be met with cries of 'Hands up !' and a volley from the wall of the enclosure. Foiled in this direction, they turned back to the cover of the house and hastily decided to work round the corral and take it from both sides.

But Francis's first shot had been the signal for the surrounding Light Horse troopers to come on at the double and the blowing of a whistle behind them and shouts of 'Hands up !' from every direction showed the Boers that their plight was desperate. Several of the younger members made a dash for liberty but ran straight into the cordon, whilst their elders who tried to defend the farm were little better off and after a few minutes ceased firing and surrendered.

Thanks to the darkness the one Boer shot by Francis had been the only casualty and he, by the irony of fate, was Dirk's cousin, Edgar Brand, who had refused to vote the death sentence and had been ordered out to guard the horses. There were only eight prisoners, but amongst them were notabilities no less than General Paul Van Wyck and Feld Cornets Lippen and La Grange for whose special benefit the drive of ten thousand horsemen had been organised for the morrow, whilst amongst the rest were several recognised desperadoes whom Lord Kitchener would be delighted to welcome under lock and key.

The good news was sent back to Colonel Macpherson and the

squadron camped on the scene of victory. A searching investigation of the farm revealed a cache of rifles and ammunition under the floor-boards beneath the great family bed in which Tantje Rosalba had so recently lain in mock travail, and as the place had been used as a *depôt* of arms as well as an ambuscade, Colonel Macpherson gave orders for the inhabitants to be evacuated to the nearest concentration camp and the farm to be destroyed.

So next morning saw Katje and Sannie, two crestfallen and sullen conspirators, with the blubbering Piet and two Kaffir girls packed off in a mule waggon with their goods and chattels for Middelburg in charge of Sergeant Waby and a few troopers. Potts took leave of the ladies with every courtesy and waited until the cortège was out of sight over the skyline, before giving orders to set fire to the farm.

But the man from Warrego River, suffering the pangs of two years' exile, felt no such consideration for their feelings, and after marching for five miles, halted his charge on some rising ground, and turning in his saddle on the 'tollfree' thrust out his lean jaw at Katje, and pointing back over his shoulder with his thumb said :

'Better take a last look at the old shack.'

The two girls turned round on the waggon-seat and surveyed the familiar landscape of their childhood. There stretched the rolling dun-coloured plain sown with occasional hog-backed iron-stone *koppies* and there in the distance rose the sharp silhouette of the Magaliesburg Mountains cut as it were out of pale purple velvet. But looking back down the ribbon of track by which they had come, a long accusing finger of black smoke pointed upwards to the cloudless sky. It was the home of their fathers.

The yellow dog which had been following the waggon now raised his nose to heaven and gave vent to one long, lugubrious howl. As at a given signal Sannie burst into a storm of weeping and sobbing in which she was vociferously joined by the emotional Piet and the Kaffir girls.

'*Arme ek ! Arme ek !*' she wailed, and rocked her great body to and fro on the seat of the waggon.

But little Katje beside her sat gazing down the track, whitefaced and still, her dark eyes smouldering with a bitter hatred that would last for generations.



*BRET HARTE.**A CENTENARY PORTRAIT.*

BY GEOFFREY BRET HARTE.

IN the quiet country churchyard of Frimley in Surrey, a famous American lies buried. This year marks the centenary of the birth of Bret Harte, who has left not only to American literature but to the literature of the world an imperishable legacy.

To him California owes the immortalisation of its most romantic epoch, the pioneer days of the great gold rush of 1849 which drew from all parts of the earth, and from all strata of human society, men bound by the common quest for wealth and adventure.

From the lawless mining camps in their magnificent, rugged setting to the peace of his last resting-place in England is a long road for a man to travel, and the story of his rise to fame and its consequences is an interesting one.

Although there is, to-day, no better-known name than his in California, where a whole territory has come to be called the 'Bret Harte Country,' my grandfather was not a Westerner. Born in Albany, in the State of New York, in 1836 of a long line of English and Dutch settlers, he went out to California at the age of seventeen, in the company of his younger sister to join their mother who had remarried and settled in San Francisco. Among all those whom the fabulous, newly discovered West drew to the Pacific coast in those feverish years, none could have appeared less cut out for the rôle of rugged pioneer than this slender rather delicate youth, and there was nothing to indicate that he would one day draw out of it riches far more enduring than the ore of its waters.

Yet if childhood environment and inclinations were any indication of his future, there could be little doubt of the path that lay before him. His father, a professor of Greek, possessed a library rich in history, philosophy and literature, and at the precocious age of six, he had begun to read Shakespeare and Dickens. He was eleven when, unknown to his parents, his first poem was published. It was not, however, until he was twenty-one, four years after his arrival in California, that he wrote in his diary

the memorable words which constituted his real dedication to literature.

‘ In these 365 days, I have again put forth a feeble essay towards fame and perhaps fortune. I have tried literature albeit in a humble way—successfully—I have written some poetry: passable, and some prose (good) which have been published. The conclusion forced upon me by observation and not by vain enthusiasm that I am fit for nothing else—must impel me to seek distinction and fortune in literature. Perhaps I may succeed—if not I can at least make a trial. Therefore I consecrate this year or as much of it as God may grant for my service to honest, heartfelt, sincere labour and devotion to this occupation.—God help me—may I succeed.’

Little did my grandfather know how prophetic were these words, or how soon this wish was to be fulfilled, beyond his most audacious hope. Meanwhile, in his early years, he tried his hand at a variety of trades, each of which provided him with invaluable material for his future work. He was, in turn, apothecary’s clerk, school teacher and printer’s devil, and for a time, armed guard on the celebrated Wells-Fargo express coach which transported the newly mined gold from the camps to the city. This was a journey frequently interrupted by highwaymen; his predecessor was shot through the arm and his successor killed.

He did not lack physical courage and he lacked even less the courage of his opinions, although they were more than once to be the cause of grave personal danger. While editor of a small frontier town paper, he had not hesitated to denounce in print the brutal massacre of Red Indians, men, women and children, by the white population, although he knew that this action would cost him his position and possibly his life. As his most recent biographer, Stewart, wrote, ‘ men fresh from the blood of women and children would not hesitate over lynching and shooting down an impudent cub of an editor who dared to oppose them ’ and, the ink still wet upon the bold headlines of his paper, he had sat with two loaded revolvers upon his desk waiting for the infuriated mob to break in, and was saved from death only by the intervention of State troops. All his life, he was to voice a fierce hatred of injustice, intolerance and racial oppression through his pen.

At the age of twenty-seven, my grandfather had become editor of a San Franciscan paper of famous literary memory: *The Californian*, to which a coterie of writers with brilliant futures con-

tributed. Foremost among these was Mark Twain, who, in later years, paid to my grandfather a magnificent tribute when he wrote that he 'trimmed and trained and schooled me patiently until he changed me from an awkward utterer of coarse grotesqueness to a writer of paragraphs and chapters that have found favour in the eyes of the very decentest people in the land.'

In 1868, when editor of the newly founded *Overland Monthly*, Bret Harte saw the fulfilment of the wish expressed in his diary eleven years before. He was just thirty-two when 'The Luck of Roaring Camp' brought him sudden fame. This story, followed by 'The Outcasts of Poker Flat,' travelled far beyond the boundaries of California. They brought flattering offers from Boston, the centre of literary America, and crossing the ocean came into the hands of the man whose work he most admired, Charles Dickens. Forster's biography of Dickens tells of the deep impression these stories made upon him; of 'the painting in all respects masterly' and how 'honestly moved' he had been. Dickens at once wrote to the young American author in California, inviting him to come to England and to contribute to *The All Year Round*.

It was a strange link, this reciprocal admiration of a great writer at the end of his career and one whose star was rising, a link all the stranger since neither of them was aware of it at the time. Before this letter reached its destination, Dickens had been laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, and my grandfather, unaware that he had written to him or ever read these stories, held up the *Overland Monthly* to include as a final tribute what is said to be his finest poem: 'Dickens in Camp.'

Fortune had singled him out for special favour and everything he wrote added to his reputation. His stories had brought him literary distinction, but it was a poem that won for him a popularity amounting to national celebrity. 'Plain Language from Truthful James,' best known as 'The Heathen Chinees,' had a reception unparalleled in American literature. To-day, few verses are better known in the English language than the opening lines of this poem:

' Which I wish to remark  
And my language is plain  
That for ways that are dark  
And for tricks that are vain,  
The Heathen Chinees is peculiar,  
Which the same I would rise to explain.'

The enthusiastic reception of this poem did not please him. What had been intended as good-natured irony, written for his own amusement, soon served to heap ridicule upon the Chinese population in America, the very kind of injustice he had so often fought against. Not only did he bitterly regret having written it, but in later years he did not like to speak of it or to hear of its fame.

In 1871, tempted by the repeated offers from Boston and New York, my grandfather decided to leave California and return to the East. Seventeen years before he had arrived in California as an unknown lad, and now he was leaving as its most distinguished citizen.

The reception accorded my grandfather during this three-thousand-mile journey across the American continent seems in retrospect almost unbelievable. 'Almost as many towns as wrangled over the honour of having given birth to Homer have striven to tempt Mr. Harte to abide with them,' one paper wrote. Howells, who first entertained him in Boston, spoke of his 'princely progress,' while a great English daily humorously summed up the situation when it wrote :

'The East and the West contend for the reflected rays of his celebrity ; cities dispute for the honour of his presence ; Chicago beguiles him from San Francisco ; New York snatches him from Chicago, and Boston plots deeply his abduction from New York. His slightest movement is chronicled in every paper and where he stops for a few days, a kind of "Bret Harte circular" appears in the press.'

Finally at Cambridge, outside of Boston, America's foremost intellectuals, Emerson, Lowell, Longfellow and a host of lesser lights, entertained him, while the *Atlantic Monthly*, which had first heralded his rise to fame, followed it with a magnificent offer for twelve contributions within the year, an offer said to be the highest ever made of its kind.

If this was success in life, he had certainly achieved it, and there was nothing to indicate the long and tragic struggle ahead. At this critical moment in my grandfather's career, there is little doubt that, had his family life been a different one, the course of his future would also have been different. The lack of home life and domestic unity, of sympathy and understanding, things of which he stood by temperament deeply in need, was to be the cause of great unhappiness and loneliness in these as in later years.

Furthermore, very heavy claims were being made upon his earning capacity which in time crippled him financially.

Already, a year after his arrival in the East, my grandfather was forced to take up lecturing in addition to his literary work. This was to him the most difficult and odious method of making money, even though it proved extremely profitable. Genial in the company of friends, he was shy and ill at ease before an audience, with results that are easy to imagine when faced with new audiences that had to be won over nightly. These tours lasted three years and covered a good part of America as well as Canada. The letters to my grandmother of this period reveal the immense strain which they imposed upon him mentally and physically. The picturesque uncertainty of travel, by which he was never able to count upon reaching his destination, did not add to his peace of mind. 'At Toronto,' he wrote, 'the audience waited for me an hour and a half, as I flew towards them in a special train . . . which I had telegraphed ahead for, and in which I dressed myself at the rate of seventy miles an hour—the most rapid and unsatisfactory toilet I ever made.' Another time, the train having broken down 'as usual' fifteen miles from his appointment, and on the bleak edge of a prairie, he hired a horse, and strapping his blanket and lecture to his back, covered the distance in time.

The strain of overwork and deep personal worries sapped his creative energies as well as his strength, and six years after his arrival from California, his health broke down and he was unable to write.

Diplomatic and consular posts abroad were at this time occasionally awarded to distinguished men of letters in public recognition of their services, and influential friends in government circles urged him to accept one. Interviews with the President of the United States and the Secretary of State resulted in two widely different offers being made him. One was the post of First Secretary to the Legation in St. Petersburg, the other, a post without glamour but offering a considerably increased salary, consul in Crefeld, Germany. This latter offered him a complete change, a chance to regain his lost health and absence from financial worry until he would be able to write again.

In 1878 he sailed for Europe, little realising that he would never see America again. He was, at forty-two, a sick and discouraged man. In contrast to his previous journey across the continent, his passage to Europe was unheralded. Had he known

of the welcome awaiting him, especially in England, he would have been greatly surprised.

Up to this time, my grandfather's knowledge of England had been derived from history and the great masters of her literature. Even in after years, when he knew the countryside well and loved it for its beauty, he continued to associate it with these memories. 'The run up, by rail, from Plymouth through southern and woodland England was so beautiful that it half-atoned for the voyage,' but London, where he stopped for a few days on his way to Crefeld, 'this great, solid, earthly, powerful and practical London' filled him only with an overpowering loneliness. He knew nobody, and nobody was aware of his existence. At that moment it would not have seemed possible to him that England would be his future home; that he would come to be welcomed as few Americans had ever been; that he would hold for the rest of his life an honoured and privileged position here.

His work had given him an international reputation, and had been widely translated. In Germany, Gabriel Conroy had become a best-seller; in England, Dickens had not been the only one to recognise his talent.

He had only had time to arrive in Crefeld when, from his old friend, James Anthony Froude, the historian, whom he had known in America, he received his first invitation, and returned to England no longer as a stranger.

'Imagine, if you can, something between "Locksley Hall" and the "high wall garden" where Maud used to walk, and you have some idea of this graceful English home. I look from my window down upon exquisite lawns and terraces all sloping towards the sea-wall. . . . I walk in the long high garden past walls hanging with peaches and fruits . . . looking over the ruins of an old feudal castle, and I can scarcely believe I am not reading an English novel or that I am not myself a wandering ghost.'

In this same letter to my grandmother, he spoke of Froude.

'I love him more than I ever did in America. He is great, honest, manly—democratic in the best sense of the word—scorning all sycophancy and manners, yet accepting all that is round him, yet more proud of his literary profession than of his kinship with these people whom he quietly controls.'

Froude spread the news of his arrival, and his friendship was

the key to British hospitality. At Newstead Abbey, the home of Byron, the Webbs received him with open arms. They styled themselves his 'English first-cousins' and insisted that he consider Newstead as his 'English home.' At the neighbouring estate, Bestwood Lodge, the Duke and Duchess of St. Albans showed him similar hospitality. This was the beginning of life—long friendships, and in the next twenty-two years his visits here were to be very frequent. 'I have heard much of English hospitality,' he wrote in another letter, 'but never was so pleasantly convinced of it.' Newstead Abbey, through its association with Byron, was of particular interest to him, and there are vivid descriptions of the place in his correspondence.

'To be *here*, where *he* played as a boy, and know how dreadful it must have been for him to part with it; to see the great house of "Annesley" and even the "antique oratory" where he stood with Mary Chaworth, and feel in some queer way *why* he was unappreciated here . . . to come back to the abbey and at night hear the wind sighing through the ruined central window of the chapel . . . or to come up . . . through the old cloisters, when the light of your bedroom candle is but a foot from you, and from every arch the figure of the "black friar" seems to steal forth—then you begin to understand something about this proud, handsome, sensitive, lame boy.'

Among England's literary contemporaries, George Eliot most interested him. 'I was very pleasantly disappointed in her appearance, having heard so much of the plainness of her features.' Her face expressed 'elevation of thought, kindness, power and humour.' Her conversation delighted him. 'It was like her books . . . but I think kinder and less hard than some of her satire.'

After private hospitality came public recognition. The year after his arrival in Europe, he was asked to reply to the Toast to Literature at the Royal Academy dinner, an honour rarely extended to a foreigner, and, having been unable to accept, it was offered to him again the following year. In the presence of the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal family, the Prime Minister and other ministers of the government, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Lord Chief Justice, and the ambassadors of most of the foreign Powers, Sir Frederick Leighton, the president of the Academy, introduced and welcomed him in a most friendly and flattering speech, after which my grandfather made his address.

This same year he was transferred and promoted from Crefeld

to consul at Glasgow. The *Daily Telegraph* devoted an editorial of welcome and his English friends wrote: 'You now belong to us.' My grandfather had asked for this transfer on account of his health. His sickness had been greatly aggravated by the climate of Crefeld. Glasgow, he soon discovered to his dismay, possessed an even worse one. While in Germany, he had managed to write a few stories, often in considerable pain, but for the first two years of office in Glasgow he was almost a complete invalid. It was not until 1883, after almost a decade of literary inactivity, that he began to write seriously again.

Loneliness and absence of home life added much to the depression of the years in Glasgow. Repeatedly, he had hoped that his family would come over to settle in Scotland or England, but the only thing that materialised was a two-months' visit from his second son, my father. Three years later, through a change in the Administration, what he most feared came to pass. Together with other holders of diplomatic and consular appointments, he received notification of his removal from office.

My grandfather now entered upon the most difficult part of his career. He was nearing fifty and faced the world without other resources than his pen to support his family, and he no longer possessed the vitality and strength of youth. Not without bitterness he had to realise the economic impossibility of returning to America, for while everything he wrote was held at a premium in England and all over Europe, his own country, which had boosted his fame, had apparently lost interest in him now that he left its shores.

With great courage, for he was at this time already almost an invalid, he set out on the last lap of his life, to meet his difficulties squarely. He was determined that my grandmother in America should not suffer from his changed fortunes, and although his children were now grown up and his two sons making their own way, he did not curtail his regular remittances. Up till then he had turned over to her his full consular salary, and he had to make up this amount and make enough for his own needs as well.

To do this, he had to write unceasingly. Immediately after handing over the consulate to his successor, he established himself in London, and through his literary agent, A. P. Watt, who, relieving him of all business connections with publishers and editors, proved of invaluable assistance, he devoted his entire time to work.



No sooner was one story finished than another was begun. Sundays were the same as weekdays, and there were no holidays. Spring, summer, autumn and winter were alike in that, together, they provided three hundred and sixty-five days in which to make up his necessary income.

Unlike some writers, he was a slow and meticulous worker. Every word was weighed before being set down, then often crossed out and rewritten, while, as one of his biographers said, what he threw into the waste-paper basket would have established the fame of another man. One thousand words was the maximum he could accomplish in a day and this often required eight hours of work.

With amazing intellectual vitality my grandfather produced, at this harassed period, work which is considered finer than what he wrote in the hey-day of his fame. 'Heaven help that it may last!' he wrote to my grandmother. 'I have little else to live for now but to leave a name, and I hope a little something tangible to you and the children and I only ask for health and strength to do that.'

He was by no means a recluse and found in social intercourse a relaxation from his day's work. Most of the great historic homes of England were open to him, but when accepting the invitations of his older friends, it was with the understanding that he might devote part of the time to his literary labours. About this time began his close friendship with the late Marquess of Northampton, and several of his stories were written at Compton Wynyates and Castle Ashby.

While he deeply appreciated the welcome extended him in England, my grandfather keenly felt the long separation from his own country. Twenty-two years of residence in the British Isles did not weaken his patriotic feelings, and it was his constant hope that he might one day be able to return there if only on a visit, a hope which was not fulfilled. His compatriots who came abroad merely to cultivate European society, 'title-hunters' of one sort or another, moved him to scathing contempt. 'They think it their first duty to impress Englishmen with the fact that they are still as English as they are, and ignore the fact that a hundred and fifty years of isolation and independence have made us a new and distinct people.'

He was proud of the traditions of his country and felt the need for a greater national tendency in American literature. Few Americans had a deeper knowledge and appreciation of English

literature than he had, but he realised the possibilities offered to American authors of using the characters and background of their own country for their work. No writing was more essentially American than his own.

Holding such views, it was ironical that he should frequently have been the object of slander in the American Press, accusing him, among other things, of being unpatriotic.

Pride and a deep-rooted reticence kept these vexations as well as his personal troubles from the world, and his most intimate friends knew little of his loneliness, the reasons for his unceasing work or the indomitable courage with which he fought sickness and suffering to accomplish it.

The twenty years of separation from the time of my grandfather's departure from America to that of my grandmother's arrival in England shortly before his death, were bridged by a long, intimate correspondence. The children in the early years of this separation held a large place in his mind and heart. Not to see them as they grew up, not to be able to visualise them except with the help of an occasional photograph, to know them only by scant descriptions, was one of his hardest burdens. His elder son he never saw again; his other children he saw again only when he was an old man.

In 1893, my father and mother came to England to settle, and until my grandfather's death nine years later, he was a frequent visitor to our Surrey home. In his rôle of grandfather I have a very vivid recollection of him. I can well remember him playing with my brother, now dead, and myself, with the contents of those mysterious packages which always accompanied his visits. He liked to see us alone and not in the intimidating presence of grown-ups. I can still hear my mother's voice calling from the hall for me to come down, 'Your grandpapa is here'! and remember entering the room where he stood alone in a characteristic position, his hands and back to the fire and his legs apart. He seemed tall although he was not, and very frail which he was. His hair was snow-white, parted in the centre and brushed away from his forehead with beautiful neatness. He was always quietly and immaculately dressed with the one festive touch of a flower in his button-hole.

A great friendship united my grandfather and my mother. At Christmas, which with rare exceptions he spent with us, and on birthdays there were little exchanges of gifts which, on my mother's

side, consisted usually in some of her handiwork. Though these gifts pleased and touched him, he sometimes pretended to be puzzled by their use.

‘I hardly know how to thank *her*,’ he wrote in a letter to my father, ‘for that beautiful nightgown-case, shirt-case, dining-table cover, slipper-case, fancy-waistcoat and pillowslip combined which she sent me . . . and how perfectly scented it was! . . . When I take it in the train with me in my dressing-bag, haggard City men lean their heads out of the window and say to each other, “How beautifully the country smells.” When I opened the package here, the roses on the balcony turned pale with envy and withered on their stalks, the jasmine on the porch shut up, and the honeysuckles stopped “suckling.”’

His love of flowers led him to travel with a unique piece of luggage. It was a portable, flowering heliotrope, growing in a deep, narrow bed, protected by a wire trellis and provided with a convenient handle. Nobody was allowed to carry it but himself, and at its destination, it lived on his window-sill or writing-table. Our first crop of roses was always sent to my grandfather in London, although they did not always arrive as fresh as they were packed.

‘Thank you and your wife so much for your thoughtful offering,’ he wrote to my father; ‘they (the roses) were compressed so tightly in their narrow box that I had to draw them out with a corkscrew! But that, I suppose, is a particularity of “first roses,”—being shy and reluctant. After I got them fairly together again, with the aid of a spoon and my hatbrush, I put them in a bowl, where they looked very pretty,—exactly like a mint julip!’

His one hobby in the last years of his life was photography, a hobby that was shared by my father and which led to keen rivalry as to who could develop, print and tone the best results. To the daughter of his friend, Edgar Pemberton, he wrote:

‘Thank you so much for the small indefinite pictures of me and the huge distinctive one of your father’s foot! It may be a foolish human weakness, but I *should* have liked, (as the plates are small) to have had *one* plate all to myself. . . . Do you keep a set of small plates with his foot in the corner—a sort of perpetual reminder—a kind of *ex-pede Herculeum*? You know *I* don’t mind, but it must be disconcerting and *ominous* to the average young man whom you take.’

In 1901, after a long period of semi-invalidism, my grandfather's condition took a serious turn for the worse. His throat had been causing him trouble for a long time and the doctors were puzzled. His suffering became acute and his condition gave way to alarming weakness. The doctors ordered, of course, freedom from work and worry—two things from which there was, for him, no escape. Far from decreasing, the spectre of work loomed larger and his failing strength made it more difficult to cope with it. His wife and the greater part of his family were entirely dependent upon what he could still earn by his pen, and if, at times, he was too ill to write, this meant only longer and harder hours later on to catch up with lost time. Only a tremendous effort of will carried him ahead.

Years before, from the Isle of Wight, he had written my grandmother: 'Sick or not, in spirits or out of spirits, I must work and I see no rest ahead.' Now under far graver conditions, he admitted that if for a single day he turned aside from his task, it was with the greatest difficulty that he could take up the thread again. As his suffering increased, he was hardly able to swallow and lived on jellies and soft foods. 'My wretched body is scarcely worth the sum I am spending upon it,' he wrote, but only once, when his condition seemed unendurable, did he express a longing for anything that could give him a day and a night free from pain.

The most famous doctors attended him, but only when it was far too late to operate successfully, did one of them discover that what they had been treating as acute laryngitis was in reality cancer. The end could only be a question of months. My father was present at this consultation, and received the news in private. My grandfather was not told. He did not need to be, for he already knew that he was dying, even though he did not know the cause.

Just before the last Christmas of his life, he received the news of the death of his eldest son whom he had not seen since he left America twenty-four years earlier. Although he usually spent Christmas with us, he was this time too ill, too crushed in spirit to leave his rooms at Lancaster Gate. 'God knows,' he wrote to my grandmother, 'it is a sad Christmas—for you, for both of us. Happy only to the *one who has gone*.'

What energy he could still command had to be devoted to his work, and in these days of acute suffering he wrote some of his best and most humorous stories.

He rallied through the winter and came to us in the spring. From our house, he went to stay with his old friend Madame Van de Velde, only a short distance away. He hoped to write a new story. He began the opening sentence, crossed out and rewrote it, took a fresh sheet and began again. Then he laid down his pen for the last time. Weary in mind and body, he could no longer work.

A few days later, in the evening, as he sat reading, he had a sudden hæmorrhage. He rose, and asking that nobody should assist him, went slowly up the stairs to his room. All his life he had struggled alone, and he wished to die without help. He refused to go to bed and spent his last short moments in prayer. Soon after, there was a second hæmorrhage and the end had come.

Thirty-four years have passed since Bret Harte was laid to rest in Frimley churchyard, and in these years America has honoured his memory and recognised his place among her greatest writers. His grave has been visited by people of many nations and there have been repeated plans for the removal of his ashes to his native country. It is to be hoped that this will never be done and that his resting-place will for always remain undisturbed, in the country which so warmly and hospitably welcomed him.

*BIRDS OF AN INDIAN GARDEN.*

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL A. H. E. MOSSE, C.I.E.

It was a Garden somewhere in Western India, of no great size, and unpretentious ; in the way of flowers it then had little to offer, but it was green. And to be green at the time and place of which I write was, in a garden, beyond all other virtues. That was, at any rate, the opinion of the Lady of the Garden. For the month was May, in a year following a grievous failure of the monsoon rains, and that little plot of real green turf, green trees around it, was, in the midst of the sandy country where my lot was for the moment cast, just the kind of oasis needed to keep mind and soul from becoming as parched as was the body.

May came to an end. June wore on and still the longed-for rains held off : all day long a blazing scorching sun. The rose-trees drooped and fainted ; despite frequent watering the grass plot lost its freshness. Alone the gold-mohur-tree continued bravely to put forth its blossoms of scarlet flame. Even the feathered crown of the palm-tree, towering proudly to the sky, bowed before the suffocating dust storms, as a burning south wind hurled the sand of the plains upon the devoted Garden, covering the leaves of the trees with a thick layer of dust beneath which they could scarcely breathe. And then at last the heavens had mercy and the flood-gates opened wide. Once more the sap flowed freely in the trees, their leaves washed clean of the sand that had clogged their pores, while the thirsty earth drank in deep satisfying draughts of the blessed life-giving rain. The Garden was itself again.

The change in a very few days was miraculous, as the whole country round began to show forth the green life which had for so long lain concealed beneath a surface of arid brown. In the Garden itself the roses were among the first to blossom forth in dainty buds of pink and yellow, charming things that somehow always remind me of sweet seventeen in a sun-bonnet. In the centre of the Garden was a trellised arbour with a flagstaff from which the flag of England floated upon the breeze. Over the sides and roof of this arbour grew a creeper whose name I never knew. Very weary of life it had seemed a short week before, but now new

leaves were sprouting and already a score of delicate white flow'rets raised up-turned faces to the sky; insignificant little blossoms enough, but I fancy their message of humble gratitude to the heavens that sent the healing rain reached as far as aught that the gold-mohur's gorgeous blooms could say. Even the purple-magenta blossoms of the bougainvillaea, which under the May sun had been of a crude and staring hue, now, in a setting of fresher green against the restful grey of the monsoon clouds, had taken on a softened expression, and allowed the eye to rest upon them with a pleasure that had never before been theirs to give. And, that the pleasure which the Garden had to bestow should not be for the eye alone, the moon-flower's white purity presently joined with the roses and the more sensuous moghra blossoms in sending a fragrant message far on the evening air.

So much for the Garden itself. It is rather of the Garden's feathered children, rejoicing with the roses in the quickened life around them, that I have to tell. I shall begin with one of the tiniest of them all. By one of the side walks grew a modest little bush with rather large drooping light-green leaves, and in June, perhaps because of its very modesty, to its charge was entrusted an important Secret, and lower than ever drooped the pale leaves in sturdy determination to preserve their trust inviolate. There was need of such determination, for perched upon the summit of the palm hard by was a crow, whose evil eye little escapes, and whose zest for mischief knows no bounds. Had anything gone wrong it would have been a tragedy. For the Secret, sheltered by three hanging leaves, was a fascinating one—a wonderful little tailor-made house, owned by a dainty wee couple of olive-plumaged tailor-folk, and destined for the accommodation of treasures beyond price, a set of tiny speckled eggs of palest blue. Truly the little bush had cause to be proud of the trust confided to its care.

I had been watching the little bird-tailors, and had suspected for some days that there was such a Secret, before I was thought worthy of confidence and permitted to see tiny bits of cotton and fluff being collected in the verandah by the bonny wee seamstress herself. Most Anglo-Indians must know the Tailor-bird, a cheery little person with a longish bill who, clad in a tail-coat of greeny-brown, hops about the potted plants of one's verandah in perky wren-like fashion. His voice, several tones too loud for such a diminutive creature, is as cheery as his manners, while the work-

manlike way in which his wife and he sew together, with bits of cotton, the leaves that support their nest, is one of the wonders of avine architecture.

Another of the children of the Garden, who builds a charming nest hanging from the fork of a branch, was that lovely creature the Indian Oriole. Flashing like a daylight meteor between the trees, the brilliancy of his golden plumage seemed to challenge that of the sun himself. In full view of the verandah, which provided me with a sheltered post of observation, was a palm-tree, the fibre on the trunk of which furnished a building material much in request among the feathered folk, most of whom, with the coming of the rains, were now upon house-keeping intent. One morning I watched a pair of orioles in the palm. The hen bird, in a greenish-yellow dress of more sober tint than her lord's gorgeous vestments, had pulled out a string of fibre in a long loop, but could not get it away ; the fact was that, in her position, the loop was too long to be drawn taut, and after a number of unavailing efforts she gave it up and turned her attention to another string. Had a weaver bird been there he could have shown her the solution of the difficulty—to bite through one end of the loop and then to close your wings and drop through the air until the string tightened and broke. The cock bird the while sat on an adjacent branch and looked on, making never an offer to help. He was probably dreaming of the hairy caterpillars in which, abhorred though they be by other birds, his soul delights. In any case, as an oriental, he was doubtless a believer in the maxim 'Let the women do the work' ! No fear of a woman's suffrage question in that community.

In the spring a young bird's fancy—— In the Garden all the world was mating. A trio of Bulbuls afforded me a glimpse of an interesting little drama—the old story, a lady and two admirers. For three or four days I saw the courtship going on. First one and then the other of the cock birds, finding his lady alone, would seize the opportunity, bowing and fluttering outstretched wings, to declare his love ; but invariably in a minute or two his rival would break in upon his impassioned protestations, and round the Garden they would chase each other with a storm of angry words. All the while the cause of the trouble would sit quietly preening herself, the picture of demure indifference, or fly off to some favourite hunting-ground in search of caterpillars. Whether a desperate



battle was fought when I was not there to see and the prize was to the victor, or whether she made up her mind in some other way I cannot tell ; but eventually her choice was made, and with the favoured lover she too set about the business of site-hunting and examining the quality of the fibre on the palm-tree. Their nest was in a shrub almost beneath the shadow of the palm, so that building material was not far to carry, and in a very few days the first was laid of the pretty mauve-pink eggs, mottled with blotches of a darker hue.

What of the other disconsolate swain ? I could always recognise him by a stray white feather in his right wing which proclaimed him a bit of a dandy. It may be that was why he failed ; perchance the lady was a believer in solid everyday virtues for which she declined to give him credit. Two or three days after he had received his final dismissal I saw him perched alone in a far corner of the Garden, and as I approached he gave utterance to the cheery piping note which voices the bulbul's belief that this is the best of all possible worlds. He was not going to wear his heart on his sleeve, and would perhaps start shortly in quest of a more com-plaisant fair. But I do not believe it ; in his innermost heart he knew that there was but one bird in the Garden for him. Only to the world at large would he seem to say with the poet, ' If she be not fair for me, what care I how fair she be ! '

A bird that will by no means be ignored is the Koël, or hot-weather-bird, who says ' Who are you ? Who are you ! Who are you ! ', each phrase rising higher and higher in loud clear not unmusical notes until he cracks on a top one, and then runs down an irregular scale of softer single notes or stops to begin his endless interrogatory again. For it is endless, day or night, wherefore he is not over-beloved of mankind, at least of European mankind, and many is the imprecation called down upon his head by unfortunate humans, mind and body pining for sleep in those long stifling hours before the dawn. I have said advisedly ' European mankind,' for the Indian can give no higher praise to his beloved than to liken her voice to the koël's. A fine bird, clad in glossy black, with wonderful rubies for eyes, he belongs to the cuckoo tribe and, like most of his kindred, believes in boarding out his off-spring. At home one looks upon this habit as a vice that sadly mars the good name of the otherwise welcome harbinger of summer. But in the koël vice becomes virtue and, for me, redeems in some measure

the character of this disturber of one's repose. For the foster-mother whom he chooses to bring up his young is that past-mistress of iniquity, and foe of all youthful bird life, the Indian crow. The crow does not, of course, realise the true significance of the koel's proximity to her nest, but she undoubtedly senses the fact that it is in some way inimical to her brood. Whenever, therefore, she detects the koel husband lurking near by, she gives chase at once with raucous screams of rage. That is the opportunity of the koel's lady who, dressed in mottled grey, quite unlike the sable plumage of her spouse, has been waiting in hiding round the corner; quietly she slips in and removes one of the corbie's treasures to make room for her own. And when the old crow returns in triumph she never dreams of connecting with the departed enemy the low-toned chuckle that issues from an adjacent tree.

A bird who is somewhat plebeian, or at any rate middle-class, but possessed of considerable force of character withal, is a member of the starling family, the Myna. At the end of July a pair of mynas had their nest in the bungalow roof, and as the youthful family increased in size and internal capacity the parents were kept busy supplying a want that seemed insatiable. In August we were cursed with a plague of flies, the most effective—or least ineffective—method of dealing with whom lay in a liberal use of adhesive fly-papers. One morning a fly-paper attracted the attention of one of the mynas, which had come into the verandah prospecting, and the next moment his feet were entrapped by the sticky stuff. He quickly struggled free, and thereafter walked with circumspection. But the supply of ample provender ready to hand was too generous to be neglected, in view of that hungry clamour from the roof. His mate soon came to see what was the attraction, and from then it became the regular thing for the mynas to collect beakfuls of flies, a score at a time, from the paper. Catching individual flies took time, so that the fly-papers were unquestionably a labour-saving device of great value. But, so far at least as the flies were concerned, the sticky substance with which the papers were furnished appeared to possess poisonous attributes, and we feared for the effects upon the callow birdlings. Our anxiety, however, proved groundless and ere long the parent birds had taught their children to fly, and brought them down to the hospitable verandah which produced so many good things. For, when a diet of flies began to pall, it needed but an importunate cock of the head to one side,

with a bright-eyed glance, and biscuits were nearly always forthcoming, a welcome change of fare.

The babies, when they first arrived, had of course to be fed, but they soon learned to pick up biscuits for themselves and the why and wherefore of fly-papers; except one lazy or backward youngster who would sit with fluttering wings and imploring open beak, appealing to the rapidly vanishing parental instincts of the old birds. That could not go on for ever and there arrived a day when the original pair came alone to the verandah; the children had been turned out to make their own way in the world.

That delightful exponent of Indian natural history, E. H. Aitken (EHA), has, in his *Tribes on my Frontier*, justly taken exception to the libel contained in the scientific name—*Acridotheres tristis*—of one of the most cheerful of birds. But that the generic name, signifying 'grasshopper-hunter,' is no misfit we had about this time ample evidence. For after the flies had gone—more or less—there came an invasion of grasshoppers, a green-faced people with an equine cast of countenance, and right manfully did the mynas tackle these new intruders. Never had two birds a better time.

When, after some months' absence, I returned to the Garden, a second brood of myna children had come into being, been introduced to the hospitable verandah, and in their turn sent out to seek their fortunes elsewhere. But the old birds were permanent and privileged members of the household. When they had had their breakfast they would sit on the back or arm of one's chair, and bow their thanks in an inimitable fashion of their own, or make polite conversation if they thought one wanted entertaining.

Familiar though they were, however, they never attained to quite the same degree of intimacy as the 'Scoot,' the little striped palm squirrel which used to come, three or four of him, for a biscuit to the Lady of the Garden's hand, and would sit up nibbling a titbit on her knee, though liable to be scared into flight by the slightest movement. EHA calls him 'that painted iniquity,' and I admit his capacities for mischief are of a high order, but even in his villainy he is an attractive little beast.

A neighbour came in one day with a yarn about a weird thing in wild cats which sat in a big tree outside his gate and every evening signalled the passing of the daylight with a mournful 'miaou!' I had my doubts, it did not sound a cat-like habit.

So I investigated. And I discovered that the mysterious 'cat,' while lacking not certain of the feline attributes, yet flew—on wings whose name was silence—being neither more nor less than a big brown owl! A pair of them there were which, when not playing at 'cats,' used to talk to each other in a strange loud trilling call that sounded as if they were making soapsuds for the blowing of gigantic bubbles.

As a class, I think no birds possess a more marked individuality than the owls, with their wise faces and air of detachment from the ordinary affairs of life, their supernatural noiselessness of flight, and their voices which speak in varied tones but always with a note of the weird and uncanny that is in keeping with the character of a bird of night. One voice of the night in particular I remember, at a shooting camp not far from the Garden, deep of tone but with a peculiar quavering trill which, repeated every two or three minutes throughout the long night hours, from a tree above our tents, was too much for the nerves of one distracted human wooing sleep in vain. Wherefore the owner of the voice, a great Horned Owl, was—regretfully—condemned to an untimely end. A still finer bird, a monarch of his race, is the huge Eagle Owl, to whom I have always put down a wonderful deep-toned single note, which it were almost irreverence to term a hoot, that one occasionally hears in the depths of the jungle.

Then there was the mad owl of the Garden, who for one week used to visit us nightly, sitting on a branch of the palm-tree and ever and anon making an aimless dash at a standing lamp, banging his wings against the glass or even blundering into the verandah, and behaving generally in insane un-owl-like fashion. Perhaps his keeper found him at length, and he was escorted back to some owl asylum in one of the secret places of the jungle, for he disappeared to return no more.

There is one of the family, however, who, while as sane as any of his big brothers, yet, like Peter Pan, never grows up. Diminutive in size, and with all the precocity of childhood, the little Spotted Owlet has declined for all time to learn the first lesson of the owl family—decorum—and, to the horror of his staid and stately relations, insists upon treating life as one long game. I expect he was once taken to a circus when very young, in one of Dame Nature's moments of aberration, and then and there made up his mind to be a clown. And right effectively he clowns it. For, if you think it over, one of the most successful elements in a clown's

performance is incongruity. And there can be nothing more incongruous than the association of any idea of the chosen bird of Minerva, the embodiment of sedate wisdom, with this absurd noisy little comicality. Yet you have only to glance at him to see that he is, beyond question, an owl of the bluest blood. Watch him sit on a telegraph wire with his back towards you and, without moving his body, turn his head right round and look you in the face with the most preternaturally solemn of expressions. The next moment he winks! and in a flash hurls himself upon his brother sitting on the next wire, knocking him flying from his perch in true harlequinade style, with a flow of language the while that only a monkey could rival; then in demure silence slowly turns his head and looks at you once more. I am certain he winks again, though it is getting too dark to see.

And yet—is there something in him of the Punchinello of the old song? At any rate he can be serious when he chooses. One evening in June I was sitting alone in the gathering dusk on the old grass plot. The Burra Sahib and the Lady of the Garden were away in the Hills—the Hills! clear and blue was their outline on the none-so-far distant horizon, yet to those of us condemned to swelter in the pre-monsoon moist heat, with a temperature so high that a few degrees more or less made no difference at all, the Hills, or what they stood for, were at the very back of beyond. Day by day one had looked up at the brazen sky, where heaven was hid by the spreading shadowy wings of the Spectre of Famine, with an unspoken prayer—‘how long?’ And it did not make for a lightening of the burden that one’s own official responsibilities were intimately concerned with the loss and suffering which another failure of the monsoon rains must bring. If then there was a wound which went deep, however well concealed it might be from view, what wonder that the little black devils, who lie in wait for the soul, should seize their opportunity, when all Nature was desponding, to plunge and turn the knife therein?

The little owlet knew. There had been no sign of him a moment earlier; I did not see him come; but he was there, sitting on the grass, not more than three or four yards from my chair; nearer than he had ever been before. There was no precocious chatter this evening, no monkey tricks. But for ten long minutes, as twilight deepened into dusk, with eyes fixed upon me he sat—in silence. We were friends. Can any words express a deeper sympathy than the silence of friendship—when it is the real thing?

Then, with a farewell as noiseless as had been his greeting, he was gone. Nor did I see him go, he just was not. And the little black devils too were gone.

Next on my list is the Roller, the so-called 'Blue Jay' of India. I think few colour effects in nature are more striking on a small scale than that produced by the roller when he starts to fly, and from beneath his unassuming cloak there flashes out a pair of wings whose bars of purest turquoise contrast with a beautiful deep blue that in some lights is almost violet. Why this sudden change and display? The Hindu calls the roller the bird of Vishnu, and Vishnu the Preserver is but another manifestation of Brahma the Creator. Need one seek for an explanation of the beauty of the creature beyond the Creator's pleasure therein?

When beauty is in question one's thoughts fly naturally to the Paradise Flycatcher, a lovely bird with jet-black head and neck, but clad, the rest of him, in a robe of purest white with two delicate long streamers that trail behind him like pennons in the wind. Legend has it that originally no speck of black marred the snowy purity of his plumage; but in overweening pride he sinned—I do not remember exactly how—and in punishment his face was blackened before the world. Even to-day he may not don his gown of white until he has left the follies of youth far behind him. For the first two years of his life he is clad in chestnut and looks like a brilliant bulbul until the streamers begin to grow in his second year. His lady never has them, and dresses in chestnut all her life; even so, with her toque of shining black and eyes of blue, she is always a thing of beauty.

There were still others who deserve more than the passing word which is all that I can give them. The Magpie Robin, always spick and span, with a charming song, was one of the friendliest of them all, and through the long hot weather was always there to assure us that the rains would surely come. But when they had arrived, and he thought the Garden needed cheering up no longer, he disappeared.

The dainty Fantail Flycatcher, pirouetting with outspread tail among the rose bushes, was shyer of performing in public. Often indeed one heard his liquid trill, of only four or five notes, that is among the softest and sweetest of all bird melodies. But his

real song, a more elaborate conception, was only given to the world in the still last half-hour before the dawn. Then, regularly morning after morning, from the neem-tree near the verandah where I had my bed, he used to sing for me alone. But the bravest songster of the night was the Crested Lark, who used to perform at midnight, soaring aloft towards where the Scorpion shone in splendour. And the stars twinkled back 'Encore!', for the burden of his song was Hope and that of course is ever the message of the stars themselves.

And yet there are people who say that in the plains of India no birds sing.

Then there were the green Bee-eaters, who sat in a row, like small girls at school, along the telegraph wire. There was the iridescent little Purple Sunbird, collecting tiny insects from the hollyhock flowers to carry to his mate ensconced in a hanging bunch of rubbish and spiders' webs that none would take to be a nest. There were the Doves of three or four species that crooned and crooned and crooned again. There was—but I must make an end. Just one bird remains who can on no account be omitted.

Who in India does not know Jack the Giant-killer, the black Drongo or King-crow? He does not kill the giants indeed, but he makes their lives a burden to them, owls and hawks and crows and all the tribe of evil-doers. Not a great bird of them but he can put to ignominious flight. The oriole knows it, golden bird of the sun, but no man-at-arms, and oftentimes builds his nest beneath the shadow of the little sable warrior's wing. And what a cheery little champion it is, perching on the flagstaff stay, diving with a flirt of his long forked tail at a passing butterfly, then hurling defiance at a mongoose who for a moment has poked a pink enquiring nose from beneath a rose-bush. So long as he is on the alert, the prowling assassin will do no harm. Perhaps his note is discordant, yet it holds a sweetness that is all its own. He is a lovable character, the little king-crow. Last upon my roster, as a personality he is very far from least.

*NO TRUMPETS.*

BY F. SANDFORD WILTON.

As he glanced out through his surgery window, he saw her coming up the village street.

Her slender figure was closely wrapped in a long black coat. He recognised the garment at once. It had evidently been dyed for the occasion.

The colour was not unbecoming to her pale, clear beauty, and his heart quickened its beat. Then he noticed the cheap suitcase in her hand, and with a gloomy frown he turned away.

A few moments later the door of the tiny room beyond was opened. Light footsteps crossed the floor and a hand tapped gently at the glass panel.

‘Come in.’

She entered. ‘Good morning, doctor.’

‘Good morning, Annie. Sit down.’

She obeyed, placing the suit-case by the side of her chair and folding her hands in her lap. The right hand was ungloved. It was small and fragile, and the skin was semi-transparent, revealing a network of delicate blue veins.

The young doctor stared at it closely as he said, with some awkwardness :

‘I was very sorry to hear about your mother. It’s been a great shock for you.’

The girl nodded. ‘And she seemed as well as anything the last time I was up home—only a month back.’

Among the loose papers on his desk there was a letter. He picked it up. A flimsy sheet of ruled paper. It looked as though it had been torn from a cheap exercise book, but the handwriting that covered it was neat and flowing.

He glanced through its contents again, although he already knew them by heart. When he spoke his voice was gently deprecating—as though he were reasoning with a small child who wanted to do something foolish.

‘Now then, Annie, what’s all this nonsense about going back to London to look after your brothers and sisters?’



Her liquid brown eyes stared at him blankly. 'But of course I'm going.'

'Why?'

She shrugged her shoulders. It seemed to her a stupid question, but she answered it patiently enough:

'Well, they must have somebody to look after them. And there's only me . . . now.'

'But you can't do it. You mustn't do it. I . . . I won't hear of it.'

'Why ever not?'

He tried another tack. 'Haven't you any relations? Any aunts and uncles, and so on?'

'No. There's no one. Only me.'

'Are you sure?'

She nodded emphatically.

He regarded her for some moments in silence. It was not going to be very easy to tell her the truth.

She was barely twenty-one years of age, and the eldest of a large family. Her father, dead three years, had been a London dock labourer; her mother, a charwoman. Rough diamonds both.

But Annie herself, by some queer trick of destiny, was the cut and polished gem.

Her frail loveliness, her natural refinement, and her instinct for beauty were alike paradoxical. It was as though—to vary the metaphor—a homely fern in a pot had put forth an orchid, and having produced this one exotic bloom had reverted to type, for her brothers and sisters were all unexceptional.

On leaving school she had worked at a mantle factory, but after a while her health broke down.

She went into hospital. A weakness of the heart was revealed.

In due course they transferred her to a convalescent home. Here she made good progress, and at the end of three months was pronounced fit for light work.

But it would have been criminal to send her back to the town. She needed country air, fresh food, and medical supervision for the next few years. After that she would probably be able to lead an almost normal life again.

Accordingly, an opening as dressmaker was found for her in a small village, where there was sufficient work to provide a modest living, but not enough to overtax her strength.

She was put in the care of the young village doctor, and as

the months went by, her delicate, haunting beauty had proved strangely disturbing to his peace of mind.

Meanwhile, up in London, her widowed mother was struggling to support the other five children. A postal order arrived from the country village nearly every week. They managed somehow.

Then the mother suddenly fell ill. Annie hurried home.

A fortnight later the doctor received a letter from the girl saying that her mother was dead, and that she herself was going to remain in London to look after the rest of the family. But first of all she was returning to the village to collect her belongings and say good-bye to her friends.

And here she was.

The doctor looked at her gravely. 'I'm afraid you don't realise that you're not strong enough to keep house for five children. Not nearly strong enough.'

She shrugged her shoulders, saying as before :

'Somebody must do it, and there's only me.'

He sighed. 'How old are your brothers and sisters ?'

She counted them off on her fingers. 'Willie's fifteen ; Mabel's twelve ; Albert nine ; Gracie seven ; and Johnnie nearly four.'

'Does Willie go to work ?'

'Yes.'

'Then *he's* all right. And the others would be well cared for, you know, in an orphanage. There——'

'Charity children !'

He stared at her in amazement. Her pale face had flushed, and her brown eyes were wide with horror.

'Don't be so foolish, Annie. They'd be perfectly happy.'

She shook her head. 'Oh no, they wouldn't. Those places may be all right for some. But not for them that's had a good home and a good mother. Why, my mother 'ud turn over in her grave if she knew that her four youngest were charity children.'

He looked at her a trifle impatiently. He could not understand the stubborn pride and the deep-rooted family instinct so typical of her class. He thought it absurd that she should speak with such abhorrence of 'charity children,' when it was obvious that, in one form or another, her family would have to be dependent on charity.

He pointed this out, as delicately as possible.

'How much does Willie earn ?' he began.

'A pound a week.'

'Well, Annie, you can't all live on that, can you?'

She stared. 'Of course not.'

'Then what will you do?'

'Oh, we'll be all right,' she assured him. 'I'm going back to my old job. It's all fixed up. And the mantle factory is nice and handy, like. I shall be able to pop home in the middle of the day and see to the children's dinners.'

He leapt to his feet. 'You little fool! You're not even strong enough to look after your family. But going out to work as well—why, it would be suicide. How long do you think your heart would stand the strain?'

'I don't know.'

He hesitated for some moments. And then he told her:

'About three years.'

She considered this. 'Ah well,' she said calmly, 'by that time Mabel will have left school, and Willie will be earning more. They'll be able to manage then, on their own. Mabel's a good girl.'

The doctor gasped. He had hoped that his cold statement of fact would frighten her; break down her resolution. Instead of which, she had merely seen in it the justification of her plan. Three years—it would be long enough.

He tried to reason with her, to coax her, using every argument he could think of—except one.

She listened meekly enough, her great brown eyes fixed on his. But he could make no impression. She knew perfectly well what she was doing. And she was doing it as a matter of course. Because it was the obvious thing to do; the only thing. So why argue about it?

Her simplicity and integrity baffled him. At last he turned away and walked over to the window. Stood there with his back towards her, staring blankly at the row of cottages opposite.

He was not fighting this battle in an altogether disinterested spirit. Far from it.

He understood now why her delicate loveliness had proved so disturbing to his peace of mind. And why not? There was nothing incongruous in the idea. She had a natural grace and refinement that fitted her for any social position. And with proper care, her health need never cause anxiety. Moreover, he had a shrewd idea that she was by no means indifferent to him. She had a way of looking at him sometimes . . .

He was, as yet, a poor man. Heavily in debt, for he was

buying his practice. However, he could support a wife. But not——

He felt a sudden blind resentment against those uncouth brothers and sisters of hers, up in London. They were quite impossible. Out of the question. She must make her choice.

He wheeled round.

‘Annie,’ he said. His voice sounded queer and remote. ‘There’s another reason why you mustn’t go back to London. I love you. I want you to marry me.’

She flinched. The faint colour drained from her cheeks. A frightened, beseeching look came into her eyes. But she kept them on his face as she slowly shook her head . . .

A few moments later she was walking down the village street. She had no more farewell visits to pay, and presently she turned aside and took a footpath across the fields. It was a short cut and it brought her out at the back of the station. The gate leading on to the down platform was open. She went through.

To her surprise she found quite a crowd of people waiting for the local train. She asked a rosy-cheeked girl in a school hat if anything important was happening that day in the neighbouring town.

The girl stared. ‘Why, miss, didn’t you know? Joyce Irving’s coming this afternoon. There’s to be a civic reception. She was born in Bannixstone.’

Annie’s eyes lit up. Joyce Irving! Of course! The girl who had just made a record solo flight across the Atlantic.

She pictured to herself the main streets of Bannixstone . . . flags flying, bands playing, crowds cheering . . .

She sighed. How wonderful to be like Joyce Irving! To do something grand and heroic——

A signal fell with a noisy clatter. She looked round. That meant that the London train was due on the opposite platform. She took her suit-case and hurried towards the footbridge . . .

*So she passed over, and no trumpets sounded for her on the other side.*

## THIS WAS A MAN.

BY W. J. BLYTON.

WHEN years ago I toiled at an exciting profession in the roar of London and in the most exacting quarter of London, I escaped now and then upon a moment's impulse to the waiting house and welcome of an old, unconventional friend in a valley by the South Downs. Strange hazards had made us friends originally; he was fifteen years my senior; he had 'lived dangerously' most of his fifty-four years in wide silences in other continents, as cowboy, hobo, preacher, diver, agitator, teacher, writer, soldier, mounted policeman, trapper; and what could he have in common with me—in those days a city man, chained all his years to the same galley and the same oar? What, but a few deep ideas and tastes? These bridged all gulfs, and they do so still.

I could not then have known, however I envied his lot and his fitness for it, that so soon I was to duplicate it, with a difference; that I was to shed all that external skin by which for years I had been known, and to live in and by the country as a hard-working farmer, and to carry on, even more consecutively and intensely than was possible in literary London, those other pursuits of the mind which in those days he combined so luckily, making of his one-storey homestead a dwelling for cattle, poultry, goats, pigs, sheep; for children, friends, chance visitors, and books and ideas.

That powerful nostalgia for space and quiet which descends at moments upon the Londoner would attack me some time on a Friday; and from the Fleet Street post office a wire would go to his sequestered place in a fold of the downs, warning him to expect me. Rapidly I put my office affairs in train, and within a couple of hours I was on the way—*sans* sleeping garments, and with little more than my fare back on Monday or Tuesday; for our friendship was of the sort to stand such strains and not notice them. It was for some specific human quality in the man and his household, his small farm and house, his books and talk, that subconsciously I made this pilgrimage, as I see now; not for the views, grand as these were, of wide valleys hung with enormous woods, of 'the dim blue goodness of the Weald,' of a fragment of the Pilgrims'

Way now grass-grown, and a glimpse of sea imagined more than seen. These prospects to him were mild and home-like, after the Rockies or the Sierras riding white on the distant horizons. Of the wilderness he had suddenly had enough; the call of small green England was felt and obeyed, and with all his savings in his belt he made for New York harbour and thence to England—without any career mapped out, and with even a home to find: and before he had found either, he had found his future wife, in South England.

On essentials, and in many minor whims and tastes, there was unison between us, and therefore no ceremony: we were capable of taking up a discussion at the point left three months before. This is a thing so rare that astonishingly few people, otherwise fortunate, ever know it. Thousands half-consciously miss it, not knowing what it is that lacks. And he himself was such an original, yet an indubitable person of this time and country, that a visit to this quiet, unpretentious spot in imagination may be remembered by the reader.

The little branch-line train into which I have changed pants to a halt at the platform that dreams its trains away amid the foothills. I am the only passenger to alight, and when the two-coached train has slid on into the summer quiet, leaving the metals gleaming under the sun, I walk up the lonely, dusty-white road that ribbons toward green summits, and from a rise see a hamlet or two silent like a vision in some lake's tranquility. A breeze stirs and lisps in the dry tall grasses of the wayside and I slow down in this stillness of sun and verdure to accustom the senses to the solitude and width of things. It is hard at first to do this. Here is another and a different world from the incessant, momentary solicitations and overstimulus of town: half a county spreads its champaign before me with a sense of vastness, of nothing-doing, as of a sleeping picture.

Quite suddenly comes the reward, the leap of the blood at recovered quiet, at invisibility to the crowd, at nothing in the wide world asking or challenging the brain. I want to sing; but am approaching two cottages where hollyhocks shine with rubied chalices in the sun, and a tethered goat's is the first voice I hear in this shire of Alfred's and the South Saxons. A lone crow migrates across the blue of the sky, gives forth one caw, and silence floods back over everything. The horizons seem to-day to have gathered within them the whole of peace.

A delicate delirium of world-strangeness is on me. What am

I doing here? What was I worrying about near St. Paul's three or four hours ago? I forget. Already I feel my body and its impulses, the desire to walk on and on, more than I remember the fidget which all these weeks has passed for thinking and managing.

Then far off I see my friend. A quarter of a mile away, he is recognisable: the free gait, the persisting high-shoulders and long arms of the rider of the plains, the intent forward-swinging walk so subtly different from the progress of the country folk. He stops at a skewbald signpost which has unfamiliar village names on it, and reaches an arm into the hollow trunk of a tree, bringing out a parcel—it is one of his pre-arranged goods-delivery stations. He waves a hand and comes on along the rough, tree-shadowed lane. We meet in a patch of shadow, grip hands, and plunge into talk.

The next day, it appears, he must go across country on foot and by local coaches to Winchester to copy an inscription for a book he is writing; to see a friend; to have a free drink of ale at the ancient almshouse near the statue of Ælfred; and to price some farm stock. I am welcome either to accompany him or to linger among his apple and plum trees or savour his collection of books. What, I ask him, is the book he is engaged upon now? for something is usually on the anvil. A study of Will Langland's *Piers Plowman* and the early stirrings of folk-feeling in England, taking John Ball and Jack Cade in his stride. And I know by that token that we shall be hammering this out in his garden snug by the light of lamp and stove till bedtime at ten o'clock for several nights.

Tea is waiting: his restful, fresh-complexioned wife, a born countrywoman, does the honours; and two tanned sons and three daughters take their places at table, regardless of the wasps which compete for the jam and honey. After milking several cows, while a son milks the goats, he is freed for a walk with me through a plantation reddened by sunset to the very scattered hamlet, my cigarette smoke anæmic and urban beside the rich reek of his strong tobacco. And, while we are walking, consider my companion's past and present. In fragments I had heard of his amazing movements. Suddenly cutting cables, he slipped from England and the profession he was marked for, and gambled first on Canada, while still a boy. He was at the mercy of moods and circumstance. Tramping south, he was soon among 'settlers' who never meant to settle, but to gather dollars and go 'home': they existed in temporary log shanties run up in a few weeks. One evening he

returned from a long journey with laden sleigh, from the bush where he had been chopping all day, to find a light burning in their cabin on the distant hillside. A strange team of horses occupied the stable: in the shack, a couple of roughs had bundled out the old bedding and installed the new. He could less complain because he and his partner had seized the place with no better right. Women there were none for leagues around. Strange housekeeping methods flourished. Butter was made by putting the cream in an old cocoa tin, which, tied on the horn of the saddle, was jolted in the day's riding into passable butter. Miles away was a school house; but no sooner was a woman teacher installed than Buckskin Billy or another would marry her. The men were of all lands, all trades, all grades. One was once a Parisian clown; one an organist formerly; ex-soldiers were numerous. All exiles! Yet, he insisted, the life was prosaic. The novelist and film-producer have thrown a halo of romance over the life. Romance there was little, and that was in the scenical grandeur of the setting; a combination of mountain, forest, river and plain such as the Creator has rarely designed, a fit theatre for the unfolding of the life of a nation or for any story. Instead of an epic, however, there were ordinary grasping folk too busy in somewhat discouraging conditions to lift their eyes to the peaks or ride off on cavaliering expeditions. For several years, he became proficient at lassoing, breaking horses, and rounding cattle and sheep, at whistling, singing, accordion-playing, gymnastics and swimming. Several books of poetry remained shut after one sampling: they were 'indoor' and felt artificial, though in England they had been favourites. He fastened on to a dime copy of Epictetus. Another, of Herbert Spencer's, he threw out on the prairie when the agnosticism of it depressed him.

'I've often wondered whether anyone found it. A cowboy's opinion of Herbert Spencer might be worth giving—if it were repeatable.'

There were Round-ups. They scoured the prairie, sweeping up as they rode all the animals into one vast bellowing bunch which must be guarded night and day. Each rancher would 'cut out' his own stock. And on Sunday afternoons, the boys would gather, and sit on the corral fence to watch one break in a broncho. Or a fire broke out in the hills and all would help the Mounted Police to fight the miles of flame—the grandest spectacle he recalls: the immense dark mountains unperturbed, and behind them an evening sky, rosy with sunset.



‘For one summer I herded two thousand sheep,’ he told me, ‘and enjoyed a solitude so great that the sight of a rider on the skyline was like a ship to sailors on a raft. I lived then in a movable box on wheels, the size of a bathing machine almost—a good place in mosquito time, for there was not room for many of them.’

Twice he was tossed by bulls and nearly killed. Once he was lost on the plains and knew panic—the fear of Pan. He was unclassified: he had, as he says, ‘taken vows in the Order of Unholy Poverty.’ But he was immunised for ever from the doctrinaires and day-dreamers, knowing of what stuff human nature is. Though without gear or country or friends, he was peaceful at heart: something grew in him so fundamental and simple as to be unnamable. He joined the Lost Legion at Klondyke, ran a local paper at Calgary, Medicine Hat and Montana. Once, utterly destitute, he and a pal got into a refrigerator box on a freight train, and there stayed for two nights and three days. After a night in a Salvation Army shelter, they accomplished the next stage in the hay-box of a car carrying horses. Then they had to take to a dangerous perch on the brake-beam again. Later, after ups and downs, or downs only, he crossed to Buffalo to enlist under the star-spangled banner. ‘The army is the poor man’s tourist agency,’ he told me. ‘Curiosity rather than patriotism enlists men.’ He saw much of life and death, and was forced-marched into illness and given up for lost. He returned by cattle-boat, preached, wrote, agitated awhile; married and rediscovered green England.

It is strange how often men of mental mark are in some sort foundlings, and how early a hard destiny begins to mould those who are to encounter unusual intellectual, spiritual experience. No prophetically appreciative temperament was by to encourage, no sage to guide: but the result would seem an argument for some divinity that shapes our ends.

A large moon rose over the woodlands as we walked and talked. He had just had an invitation from towns in several States to speak to book-clubs and college circles on Chaucer or the Elizabethans. He likes the unreserve of the Yankees whom he has known in many weathers of the spirit; in booms and slumps, strikes and lock-outs. But go he cannot: a son is to be placed out in the world, and a father’s place was near, and moreover the holding needs attention. However, he is writing for a few of their reviews

still ; and New York has sent him the proofs of a book by him on—believe it or not—Dante's *Vita Nuova* and *Divine Comedy*, and his Florentine feuds and loves. He really has mastered his subject and the literature of it : I trot out what I happen to have read—Dean Church's mellow essay, allusions by Shelley, Macaulay, Lowell and certain annotators. But all this he has passed. Yet, while he corrects one chapter, I correct another for him by the paraffin light which leaves half the room dim in our shadows, while a moth or night-bird flicks against the window out of the rustling dark :

‘ In that part of the youthful year, when the Sun tempers his locks beneath Aquarius, and the nights already wane toward half the day.’

These quoted passages require careful collation with the poem, and for a while we are absorbed. No sound, save the unsteady gurgling cry outdoors of a barn-owl, the chirr of a chain in a stable, the spurt of an occasional match by one of us as we smoke, the rising of a soft night-wind. Something deeper in me is fed and contented by this taciturn hour of companionship. Then we talk. It is not the self-regardant talk of worldlings in town : it is about Richard Rolle, Mother Julian of Norwich and other mystics of our alleged practical, secular-minded race ; and Sir Thomas Browne, a favourite with us both. Then, or on some other still night in the hut, we range over St. Augustine's and St. Theresa's writings, and Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*.

In the lamp-glimmer and little smoke-cloud I look across at my chum. He lives among ideas, and they blow away from him the vague selfish fears, social and relating to one's career and pocket, which are the half of hyper-civilised life. The universal is the true antiseptic. Great ideas brace and make brave those who traffic in them. But is it supposed he has been exempt from the tragedy which visits men ? Far from it. His first and darling daughter was wrenched from him a few years ago in a terrible way ; leaving his wife numb with a self-defensive indifference to life, refusing to commit her feelings to anything or anybody.

Him also it rocked to his foundations—till they settled on some rock, religious in nature. Behind all he said upon the black paradoxes of existence was a weight of experience and initiation, so that, when a great trouble came to me, it was on him that I leaned hard, even when we were not together. For a man of a

few profound certainties, he was refreshingly ready to say at times, 'I do not know.' Indeed, he knew the wisdom of the short view :

'Disasters, do the best we can,  
Will reach both great and small;  
And he is oft the wisest man  
Who is not wise at all.'

The utmost shrewdness cannot circumvent many a visitation ; and uncaring Gallios escape scot-free sometimes. Therefore, beyond ordinary prudence, feel no anxiety.

Another tough vital clue he had quarried from living was that pity, love, grief—noble as they are—are passions and fires that require stern curbing. In black hours, reason easily abdicates in favour of emotions which have been idealised, and by others' admiration have been intensified : till calmness in bereavement is mistaken for callousness, and coolness in disaster for unfeeling stoicism.

But justice to self and the world command moderation. You, too, have your rights : *you* have to live, to go on. No less than the dead, you are an irreplaceable part of the divine purpose. It is not loyalty to the dead, to prey upon one's own vitals : it is only destroying another life. *Do your best, and leave the rest.* The first done, entitles you to do the second. Hospital doctors and nurses achieve their success *not* by feeling but by deliberate economy of feeling : mental force which might become over-sympathy, and so disable them, is transmuted into *action*, and practical observation.

A dozen times in his life (and I too know similar situations) he has had violently to exclude emotion and grief and fear from his mind, and deliberately concentrate on more comfortable issues—the alternative being misery and breakdown which could assist nobody. Coming from him, these hints told : for the character behind it is the better half of any advice. He had been knocked 'down and out' a few times, he knew the pinches of the body as well as those of the soul, and 'ought to have been dead several times' : but here he was, alive and fulfilled. If he had allowed his vivid, half-Celtic imagination to make trouble, it would have done : but he outwitted it by open-air work, forcing the creative faculty to some labour, and by paying attention to others. A herb called 'self-heal' grew in his garden, and it reminded me of his secret.

Just one other key to life of his I will mention : the power of simply *hoping*. 'Hope on : hope hard in the subtle thing that's

spirit.' The most incredible turns in fortune's wheel occur. He held that the last lines of Shelley's 'Prometheus' were ultimate wisdom, those about 'Love, from its awful throne of patient power in the wise heart.' Patience wins in 'the last giddy hour of dread endurance'—yes, 'from the slippery, steep, and narrow verge of crag-like agony'—

'to *hope* till hope creates  
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates.'

One man, so minded, he knew, could save a situation from which ordinary-calibre men dismiss themselves. When most people have despaired and said, 'This *is* the end of things for me,' he knew that there was one thing to do—to plod stubbornly on; the end was not yet, one house of life after another awaits us. He could not run away from any post: he knew that in battle, more men are killed while running away than in facing it out. And if you cannot fight in the light, fight in the darkness. No wonder he recognised kindred souls in Browning and all who take the militant attitude toward life. A good fight hallowed the cause.

I hope those few lines will not displease those who have the climbing spirit and can breathe the ether of the heights. Not all the time do we need this iron ration creed, but—we may. He had his dogmas, but about them he was reticent, believing that in each man they grew of themselves, and if genuine could not be imposed from without. 'Piety' in the ancient sense was his; deeper than formulated religion, and simpler, yet powerful. It is an attitude of 'sublime dependence,' a sense too vast and overpowering to be fastidious in its form, preceding and outliving many cosmogonies and myths. In these last we believe, with our intellects; but before the vast facts of providence, destiny, and standing to our posts in this storm of living, the difference between man and man, between the smaller varieties of religious expression, is dwarfed. The adherents of every creed, the members of every class and nation, all ages and both sexes, are put through the great mills of mortality in very much the same way; in the last resort there is no room for pedantry or exclusiveness. The elemental experiences and morality are no discoveries of our own with which we can meddle, but disclosures of the Universal which like the sunlight falls on wise and unwise, good and evil, and they claim and they permit no other acknowledgment from little man than the obedience of his life and the plain confession of his lips and his bearing. They

are in the Psalms, in Job, in Homer, in Sophocles, in Shakespeare ; they are revealed to ' pagan ' as well as to Christian, to the peasant more than to the intellectualist.

About Nature, he was no sentimentalist ; no farmer is that, or can afford to be. It is something to be used or outwitted, like the weather. Nevertheless, he lived in it as intimately as a chick in its shell ; its indifferences and violences somehow did not shock his moral perceptions, for he took the rough with the smooth—and the smooth consisted of the instinct of altruism and sacrifice which are nascent in even sub-human life. With an eye for birds, insects and herbs, and all detail, he yet took nature (out of working hours) as a mountain-path to an ideal world. No complete theory of the world was tenable : pain, accident, rain rotting his corn, blight ruining his fruit, disease, inexplicable deaths of people—these were real ; but real also was the lark singing in June's blue, bumper harvests in some autumns, happy evenings with the family at the fireside, song, rich reading, the commerce of ideas and friendship. Nature was Rhadamanthine—and merciful. Truth limps after error, justice drags behind injustice ; but they get there, in time, and at a cost—he did not blink the cost. Winter is longer than summer ; there is more endurance or perseverance in life than ecstasy and ease ; but the world as it *is* (not as we dream it) brought us down to our bare manhood, and bade us understand it out of that. Courage was a better moral truth-finder than propositions.

On more usual subjects, he could be humorous and shrewd. He did not despise writing a tale when one occurred to him, and his style was in keeping with his life. He had caught his English at its living source, among the poets and prose-writers of its best days ; his quotations were of the purest ore ; he finished his sentences, and balanced them, as if keeping a log in his shanty on the plains ; he did not care for hasty shorthand or sign-writing in certain codes of modern cliques. His metaphors and images were of his own getting, owed to no book. He never (an endearing trait) repeated a proverb on trust ; it had first to be tested on his own pulses. He wrote slowly, as became one who once did not handle a pen for years, but had listened instead to his own thoughts, the winds over Arizona and Texas, the rustle of the wilderness, the ripple of a creek, the call of coyotes and the wavering beaver-cry. He had kept among other things the brick-red face, smouldering eyes, far sight, and masculine tousled hair of those days.

He did not mind, nor did I, his yawning near ten o'clock in the

middle of my talk. 'Well,' he would say, 'this'll keep till morning.' There is work to be done, sleep to be slept meanwhile. He knocks out his pipe, puts it near his ink horn, lights a candle for me, and followed by my own giant shadow I find the little spare room; and in the quiet dawn I wake to feel I had never lain on a couch so restful as when his wife or a daughter knocked on the door and said: 'A cup of tea—on the mat. And breakfast in half an hour.'

Through the open window comes the resinous scent of the coniferous trees. All round the little farm is quietly busy: they rise here with the sun. They live economically, but they live: some of the best fresh produce of the place does not pay for transit, and so by an irony—and compensation—of our system it is eaten by the producers, as it comes straight from the ground or the tree. I gathered that things were sometimes a little tight with them: a cheque delayed, a local bad debt incurred, but somehow they lived on and in frugal comfort. In those days I saw this life and its attractiveness from the outside, as a visitor however attuned and sympathetic: to-day I see it from within, on the larger farm which at last my family and I run a few miles away—run, not as a hobby nor a subordinate thing, but for our livelihood. Our lives are insensibly and spontaneously reproducing many of the features of my friend's and his family's: oddly, some of his views rise now in me afresh as by a natural exhalation; like causes, I suppose, like effects.

Though younger than he, and differently experienced, I have seen as much as I can conveniently digest in the years left to me. There is a world to watch in my farm and in the village and its valley neighbours. As for 'experiences,' it is significance that counts, not number; and I am constantly amazed at the rarity with which I leave my own acres—or want to. If I miss looking-in on various 'events' in person I know they are largely repetitions of those at which I have been a spectator, and I have no tiniest feeling of being 'out of it.' Having been at consultations by the Cabinet with pressmen in moments of crisis, at full-dress debates, State openings of Parliament, prize-fights in stadia, Royal launches of great ships, first-nights, races; manœuvres on land and sea; under bombs; having spoken with Mussolini, Einstein, Pavlova, Milner, and a number of our statesmen and commanders; heard all the conductors and orchestras that matter, and popular authors at city luncheons; and Academy views; and chatted with *matinée* idols in their dressing-rooms; and read, as a duty or penance,

every London and important provincial daily paper, daily for consecutive years; having done these and a few other things, I am appeased—was, in fact, replete years ago. And none of them, perhaps, strike home to the more impressionable levels of a man as to meet and know a character such as I have sketched in rude outline. I will say something more: none of them make such a permanent or grateful mark on one as the books which my old comrade and I devoured and discussed so freely. Once, I knew what it was, detained for many busy, turbulent weeks from all glimpse of country and from inspired art, to rush to both again with a revulsion of homesickness, appetite and devotion. With sandwiches and several ‘pocket poets’ I absconded for the day to the most unexpected spots far from outer London, commonly ending (prophetically) at some farm, where I bought a glass of milk as an excuse for talking of the farm, to be mistaken sometimes for another of these inspectors or a buyer’s scout. On those days I

‘let Euclid rest and Archimedes pause,  
And what the Swede intends, and what the French.’

No printer’s devil at my elbow waited for my views on the Budget, the Foreign Office *communiqué*, the Paris *demarche*, the German decree, the latest Soviet plan. A life of all giving out and little taking in is not good for mental stamina; I was suffering from a rush of superficial intelligence to the head. A fallow day occasionally (when the world got on insultingly well without my opinion in its usual columns), a day of passivity under greater minds and voices, saved me from smartness; and only just. Then it was that I let Shelley sing to me, or Milton chant; or took from another pocket for half an hour something in ‘that other harmony of prose.’ It was good to taste again the glory of words, ‘right words in the right order,’ Landor, Newman, Mark Rutherford, Hudson; with the sense of another’s mastery a reader can identify himself: ‘all the charm of all the Muses often flowering in a lonely word.’

Well, to-day I, like my friend, have rather more time for the best, or anyhow come more freshly to it, with unused eyes, untired attention, a cleaner slate to write on. There comes at nights the fancy, or the conviction, that it is a greater thing to read the first-rate and lasting than to write the ephemeral; and that appreciation of a masterpiece is as grand an experience as to have produced it—and only several degrees less meritorious perhaps! It is a

fact to keep geniuses in order that even the supreme composers of music, verse, prose and plastic art are incomplete without us, impotent, unfulfilled : we are the other and needed half of Shakespeare, Beethoven, Turner and Wordsworth. We are the instruments they play on, and they without us are dumb. I have found, besides, quite independently of any hint from my friend (as he would be glad to know), that a man can, if he will, possess this 'substantial world' in fee for ever, and can go about accompanied with great voices and powers that you could not be dispossessed of even if you finish in an alms-house or a poor-law institution : they are yours, and are you. The thing to do with riches is to house them where alone they are safe—inside the mind : there the best company will crowd out the trivial, and most worries die for lack of subjects worth worrying about.

So at least I read my friend's completed life. It was a practical sermon on Emerson's remark that 'things are in the saddle and ride mankind,' and a successful solution of Carlyle's problem of 'lessening your denominator' : an unconscious exposure of the waste and aimlessness of many human lives. His range was narrow, do you say ? But to be a master is to be a master.



*HOMEWARD BOUND.*

THE sea breeze freshens, and eddies twist  
 The flying wisps of spray ;  
 The sunset deepens to amethyst,  
 Gibraltar fades in the evening mist,  
 Across Gibraltar Bay.

The turbines whirl as a speed increased  
 Augments their light refrain,  
 'A fond farewell to the glowing feast  
 Of sights and sounds in the Shiny East,  
 The purple hills of Spain.'

Our forefoot lifts to the ocean swell,  
 The bow waves curl in foam,  
 Tarifa flashes to Cape Spartel,  
 St. Vincent gleams as a sentinel,  
 Upon the course for home.

The years have passed with the seasons' flow,  
 The Fates their web have spun,  
 For some have shone in promotion's glow  
 And some are gone to their watch below,  
 Their long Commission done.

But solemn musing and wistful dreams  
 Are out of season now ;  
 Astern the wake as a ribbon streams  
 The Lizard flashes its double beams,  
 Broad on the weather bow.

The grey dawn heralds the morning light,  
 Ahead lies Plymouth Sound,  
 The pennant flaunts in arrested flight  
 Full forty fathoms of rippling white,  
 And we are Homeward Bound.

S. H. RADCLIFFE.

*ATHENS AND ITS LIFE TO-DAY.*

BY SIR CHARLES PETRIE, Bt.

CHANGE is the dominant note of the Greek capital at the present time. The old Athens of pre-war days is in process of being transformed out of all recognition as a result of the arrival in Greece of twelve hundred thousand refugees from Asia Minor, most of whom, being townsfolk, have settled in Attica in order to be near the largest centre of population in the country. A hundred years ago Athens contained a few tens of thousands of inhabitants; at the beginning of the century there were about a hundred thousand; and to-day there are more than half a million. These figures should be in the mind of every visitor as his boat draws alongside the quay at the Piræus, or when his train pulls up in the station, for they will prepare him for what he is going to find. He will see change, but assuredly not decay, on every hand.

It would be idle to pretend that this state of affairs is welcomed by all Athenians, and to many foreign Philhellenes it is peculiarly repugnant. Those who hold such views regret that when the Turkish yoke was thrown off neither Nauplia nor Corinth was made the capital, and that Athens was thus spared the dubious advantages of modernisation. It is, however, useless to indulge in regrets of this nature, for on historical and sentimental grounds Athens was predestined to be the capital of modern Greece, as Rome of modern Italy. At the same time there is no reason why the new city should not be planned in a way reminiscent of her glorious past, and it must be confessed that this has not always been the case. As one drives from the Piræus many an eyesore mars the prospect, though when the magnitude of the refugee problem is taken into account—the absorption of 1,200,000 immigrants by a nation of only 6,000,000—a few errors in town-planning are the more easily forgiven. To-day it is hardly possible to tell where Athens ends and the Piræus begins, for the buildings are uninterrupted by any stretch of open country, and the port claims to be the third in size in the Mediterranean.

Such an influx of fresh inhabitants would in itself be sufficient to account for profound social changes, but there has also been a

long period of political upheaval. During the last twenty years Greece has known three kings, two dictators, one republic, and revolutions and *coups d'état*, successful and unsuccessful, without number. Nevertheless, the foreigner will be surprised at how little, not at how much, effect these events have had upon the life of the ordinary Greek, though it would be absurd to claim that they have left so politically-minded an individual unmoved. His final reaction has been one of disgust with those who would not let him get on with his work uninterrupted, and it is this feeling which brought about the return of King George II to his throne last November.

The Restoration is bound to exercise a centripetal influence upon the social life of the capital. The old Royal Palace is a hideous building erected in the reign of King Otto in the centre of Athens, and during the republic it was converted into the Parliament-house. King George II has not reoccupied it, but lives with his brother, Prince Paul, in a smaller palace which belonged to their father when the latter was Crown Prince. The surroundings of the Court are dignified, but not ostentatious, while a dash of colour and romance is given by the picturesquely-attired Evzones who mount guard at the gate. The relatively small Royal residence of to-day, situated in a street with other houses, seems more in keeping with the practical, yet sympathetic, outlook of the present monarch than the frowning pile which housed his predecessors. The houses of several other members of the Royal Family changed hands during the republic, notably that of Prince Nicholas, father of the Duchess of Kent, which, after being a hotel for a time, is now the Italian Legation.

Nothing is being left undone to render easy the transition from republic to monarchy, and the King grants audiences without enquiring into the political antecedents of those who solicit them. He has even retained the republican Order of the Phoenix. The other Greek Orders are the Redeemer and the Order of George I, the latter, like the Royal Victorian Order, being given for special services to the Royal House. So far neither the King nor Prince Paul have had time to go out in society, but no one who has seen the reception accorded to them in the streets can doubt of their popularity with the people. It is a well-deserved recognition of the King's determination to keep the Crown above the political parties.

The long exile of the King, so much of which was spent in England, has brought him into touch with life at many points, and

has rendered him cosmopolitan in the best sense of the term. The consequence of this is already being noticed in Athens, which is far less narrow in its outlook than the capitals of many larger countries. Friends of the King from Western Europe arrive from time to time, and the Greeks are hoping that they will prove to be but the vanguard of a mighty army of foreign visitors, who will not be content merely to come ashore for a few hours from a cruising liner, as is too often the case at present, but will spend days and even weeks in the country. Another influence which is helping to make Athens less provincial than the other Balkan capitals is the air services: Imperial Airways and the Dutch K.L.M. connect it daily with both East and West, and it is now possible to breakfast in Athens and sup in London on the same day. Already the effect of this easy communication with the outside world is being felt, and both English and French are widely spoken in Athens. The latter language predominates, partly because many Greeks are educated in France, and also because the pronunciation of English is found more difficult. Yet those Greeks who do speak English speak it very well indeed.

When one talks of the cosmopolitanism of Athenian life, however, one must remember that it is as yet by no means widely extended. There is no native nobility in Greece, and the few families that have titles have received them in the past from foreign potentates, often the Doges of Venice. On the other hand, there is an aristocracy in the etymological sense of the word, which it would be impossible to praise too highly. Limited in numbers, often descended from the heroes of the War of Independence, and much intermarried, it sets an example of philanthropy and public spirit almost without parallel. The amount that is done in Greece by voluntary effort is little short of miraculous: not only, as in England, are hospitals and similar institutions erected by this means, but even roads are built. The Foreign Office was presented to the nation by one rich Greek, and the legation in Paris by another. The Benakis Museum is a third example of a munificence which it would be hard to equal elsewhere. Yet another is the Stadium, on the banks of the Ilissus, which was originally built in the fourth century B.C., was repaired by Herodus Atticus in A.D. 140, and after being largely destroyed in the Middle Ages was restored by the liberality of M. Averoff thirty years ago. The members of this aristocracy have contrived, without ceasing to be patriotic Greeks, to be equally at home in London, Paris, or Rome,

and their refining influence, reinforced now by that of the Court, is bound before long to have a broadening effect upon the whole life of the capital.

With a few exceptions, members of this upper class show no inclination to enter political life, which suffers in consequence. They work hard at their businesses, they play hard, and they are always ready to give a helping hand to their compatriots, but the Chamber has no attraction for them. This aristocracy, like that of Venice, is essentially one of commerce, and to the detriment of the nation it is confined to a few centres such as Athens, Salonika, and Patras. In the country districts there is not, as in Central and Western Europe, a resident upper class whose outlook cannot fail to influence the masses, and the peasants are untouched by those influences which are so beneficial in the larger towns.

As may be supposed, the Greek woman of position is now completely emancipated—more so than her Italian sister. In the most approved style of London and Paris she will enter the bar of the Hotel Grande Bretagne and call for a cocktail without anyone thinking the worse of her for it. Indeed, the Englishman will find the relations between the sexes in the best Athenian society more like what he knows at home than in most Continental countries. Yet this freedom is very recent, and it is still confined to a narrow circle. The peasant women of Attica can have changed but little since the days of the Turks, and among the hillsmen nothing will induce an unmarried girl even to speak to a member of the opposite sex unless some male of her family is present. By no means the least of the charms of modern Greece is that one can so soon pass from Europe of the twentieth century to Asia of the eighteenth. Old customs die hard, and especially is this the case in all that relates to death. The recent funerals of various politicians, for example, were all made the occasion for a half-holiday, and social life was largely suspended between the death and the burial of the respective individuals concerned. It was as if the Oxford Street stores closed for the funeral of Mr. Baldwin or Mr. Lansbury.

As befits the descendants of those who won Salamis the sea is a magnet to all Athenians. It is within such easy reach of the city that the shore is thronged in the summer, and the most attractive restaurants cater for all tastes and pockets. For those who can afford it there is excellent yachting, for the islands are close at hand, and the new Yacht Club is one of the most comfortable of its kind. It stands on a promontory above the Bay of Munychia,

where the triremes lay at anchor when Athens was mistress of the seas, and the narrow street by which one ascends the hill is that in which Critias met his death at the head of the Three Thousand. As one sits on the terrace of the Yacht Club, at one's feet are the ruins of the 'Long Walls,' built at the height of Athenian power by Pericles, and destroyed by the Spartans in the hour of the city's humiliation at the close of the Peloponnesian War.

It is not only the wealthy who have opportunities of enjoying themselves, for life is cheap in Athens, and amusements are no exception. The *de luxe* hotels are not expensive in comparison with their fellows elsewhere, and the cost of living for the resident is very low when judged by British standards. The Greek does not demand elaborate amusements, for he has inherited his ancestors' zest of life. He finds delight in much that the sophisticated Western European would vote a bore, and he is the happier for it. Critics declare that the Greek is too much of an individualist to adapt himself easily to the modern world, and from a political point of view there is something in this argument, but socially he is the better for this peculiarity. He amuses himself as an individual, not in the mass or as a machine. The climate renders it easy to do this at very little cost, and there are few cities where so many people know the art of real enjoyment as in Athens.

Social customs are largely governed by climatic conditions, and in the summer it is very hot. Offices and banks open early, and close about two o'clock in the afternoon, sometimes for the rest of the day, while the shops remain shut in the afternoon. The employees are thus able to go to their homes for lunch, which means a considerable saving on their weekly budget. Afternoon tea has become an Athenian habit, and the Englishman will welcome it, for whereas he will lunch about 1.15 as at home, he will not dine before nine o'clock at the earliest. As may be supposed, evening amusements begin correspondingly late, and to go to the theatre implies not retiring to bed until the early hours of the morning. Such a life, it may be observed, does not imply excessive dissipation on the part of the Athenians, but is dictated by the fact that for several months it is too hot to go to bed early. In the cooler months dinner is often taken at one of the innumerable 'taverns,' where it is easy to eat cheaply and well, while in the summer there are the open-air restaurants by the sea and in the hills, and, for those who are members, the fashionable Yacht and Golf Clubs. The proximity of the sea and the mountains renders life peculiarly

pleasant, and a bathe is not a day's excursion, but merely implies a few minutes' run in a car.

The Athenian is to-day very much what he was two thousand years ago. An English historian has written of Pericles, 'his relationship to Cleisthenes, and the enmity which existed between his house and that of Cimon, urged him to espouse the cause of democracy.' Personal and family prejudices and affinities are still the basis of political divisions, and that is one of the difficulties which the Parliamentary System in Greece will have to overcome if it is to survive. The dividing-line in the Chamber must correspond with real differences of opinion in the country if democratic institutions are not to perish. The two great parties, the Populists (once Royalists) and the Liberals (once Venizelists), have lost their *raison d'être* since the return of the King took the question of the regime out of the political arena. Latterly the division has been largely personal, and the deaths of so many prominent politicians are robbing it even of that interest. The Attic wit enables the Athenian to mock his leaders as in the days of Aristophanes, and within a few hours of the death of Venizelos, so soon after that of his enemy Condylis, the newspaper-boys were shouting through the streets, 'Meeting of Condylis and Venizelos.' The shade of Lucian must have smiled that day.

Probably this is one of the reasons among others why there is the marked reluctance, already noted, on the part of the educated Greek to enter political life. It is true that the tendency to leave politics to professional politicians is, most unfortunately, very marked in many countries at the present time, but in Greece it may, unless it is checked, prove disastrous. Unlike Italy, Germany, and Russia modern Greece seems to mistrust its young, especially in politics, and when the foreigner tries to prosecute enquiries about the attitude of the younger generation towards this problem or that he is met with an air of astonishment that it should matter what youth is thinking. Yet it is impossible to remain long in Athens without arriving at the conclusion that the young people are much more alive to the true needs of Greece than are many of their elders. The latter find it hard to forget the bitter animosities born of the struggle between King Constantine and Venizelos, and it is not easy for them to collaborate with opponents of twenty years' standing. To the young people this feud is but an evil memory, and they want to bury it for ever. Greece must beware of becoming a gerontarchy.

Perhaps the forbidding aspect of the Parliament-house has some connection with the reluctance of the young Greek to enter it ; yet it is much more suited to its present uses than it was to serve as a Royal Palace. The actual Chamber is in the style of the French, with the President's desk high above the deputies, who sit in a semicircle beneath him and who speak from a *rostrum*. Each deputy has his own desk, and a light appears on it when he is required outside the Chamber. This has many advantages over the English system, but from the point of view of the deputy it is subject to the drawback that he cannot tell who wants him, and so must risk either being pestered by bores or denying himself to an influential constituent. When a division is taken the deputies record their votes in urns placed by the tribune. The Senate used to be housed in another part of the same building, but when the monarchy was restored it was abolished.

No account of Athenian life would be complete without some reference to the great monuments of antiquity that are so prominent a feature. With the Parthenon ever before his eyes, the least romantic citizen cannot but be conscious of his glorious heritage. At the foot of the Acropolis the various schools of archæology are beginning to excavate a large area which they believe will yield important results. This will involve the demolition of what is left of Turkish Athens, and there are some who frankly deplore the destruction of the old buildings of one period for the sake of the ruins of another. The problem has arisen in the same form in Rome, and not all the glories of the *Via del Impero* and the Imperial *fori* have reconciled many Romans to the disappearance of the narrow streets which were so characteristic of their city in Papal days. So it is in Athens, and the excavators are to have their way. Nor is it easy to put the other side of the case, for there are not many Greeks who wish to perpetuate the memory of the barbarians who used the Parthenon as an arsenal, and the Erechtheum as a latrine.

The pride which the Athenians take in the past of their city has not made them indifferent to its present or its future, but Greece is a poor country, and some say that too much money has been spent on public works already. One example of Greek progress in recent years is but typical of many others. For more than a generation the question of an adequate water supply for Athens and the Piræus had been under consideration, when the arrival of the refugees rendered the matter urgent. Accordingly in 1926 the



Government decided in favour of a scheme for a dam near Marathon to hold up the waters of the Charados and Varnarva rivers, and the contract was given to an American company. The dam is nearly three hundred yards long, and the reservoir holds over forty million cubic feet of water. Even if Athens were to double her present population she would still be assured of an adequate supply of water. There can be no doubt that when conditions improve there will be further development of this type, but the Greeks are traders and sailors, and shipping is still in the doldrums; while the country has to face fierce competition in respect of its principal exports, namely currants and tobacco. There are also bondholders clamouring to be paid.

Those Athenians who can afford to do so take care to make themselves acquainted with their own country to an extent which some of our fellow-countrymen, who never think of spending a holiday in England, might well imitate. Spring is the time when excursions to the Peloponnese or to the islands are made. For those who lack either the time or the inclination to go so far afield, Attica can offer many attractions. Eleusis is the goal of many, and it has the added charm for the motorist that the road connecting it with the capital possesses one of the few good surfaces in Greece. It was made during the dictatorship of General Pangalos, who was subsequently overthrown when his efforts to fix the length of ladies' skirts proved too much for the Greek sense of humour. Pangalos had a house at Eleusis, and wished to be able to reach Athens quickly in the event of trouble. The drive there is one of the most interesting in Attica, for the visitor passes not only the church at Daphnis, with its Byzantine reliefs, but also skirts the Bay of Salamis, and the foot of Mount Ægaleos, whence Xerxes watched the defeat of his navy. The temple of Demeter is a site, rather than a ruin, but modern Eleusis is a thriving town where some very excellent brandy is manufactured.

In the opposite direction Sunion is a popular drive, and will be even more so when the new road thither has been completed, for the existing one is bad even for the Balkans. Here was a splendid temple of Poseidon, whose palace was not far away in the depth of the sea near Ægæ in Eubœa, where he kept his horses with brazen hoofs and golden manes. Some of the marble pillars of this temple are still standing on a cliff three hundred feet above the sea, and it is possible to form an idea of its beauty when it was complete. Unhappily they are disfigured by the innumerable names scratched

upon them, among others that of Byron. On the way the road goes through Laurion, where were the silver-mines that contributed so much to the wealth of classical Athens. There would appear to be little life in the town to-day, though to the cinema-goer it may have an appeal as the reputed birthplace of Pola Negri.

In yet another direction is Mount Parnes, on the borders of Bœotia, and on its lower slopes excellent wine was produced even in the days of Pericles. It is thickly wooded, and the scenery is somewhat reminiscent of that in the neighbourhood of Marienbad. This, too, is a chosen resort of the Athenians, but the most popular of all is undoubtedly Kephesia, which recalls Richmond in the days of its glory. It is beautifully situated on a hill with excellent views on all sides, and the hotels and villas are set among the trees. Its inhabitants are those who can escape in summer from the heat of the capital, and a more attractive place for such a purpose it would be difficult to imagine.

One leaves Athens and Attica with the feeling that they will not much longer remain as they are. Progress has already marked Greece for its own, and the first steps in its conquest are even now visible in the capital. A few years, if all goes well, will see perfect roads, first-class hotels in the most remote districts, and the disappearance of all that recalls the day when the Crescent still waved over Attica. When that time comes the traveller who has seen Greece as she is now will have a delightful memory that none can take from him.

*THE DREAM.*

BY CECIL MARTIN.

I HAD a dream, strange, fantastical; and yet, so poignantly vivid that, while it lasted, I lived as I have never lived through the reality of life. Music, my great gift, at whose shrine I have worshipped and laboured untiringly for fifty years, has never vouchsafed to me one moment of ecstasy, like unto that which flooded my soul during the brief moments that occupied my dream.

I have asked myself whence it came, how and why? These questions I am still unable to answer; I only know that it was as if, having searched in vain for something that was missing, that was a vital part of my very being, I had found fulfilment, utter and complete.

On this night of my strange visitation, I had reached, at the age of sixty-five, the very pinnacle of fame upon which the ambition of my youth had determined; I had set myself a high ideal and had attained it. What more could I wish than to have achieved the fulfilment of my life's work? I had answered myself that there was nought else to be desired, and yet—and yet? Whence this ceaseless troubling, this tired and wandering spirit? Wherefore this incessant yearning for that which was utterly unattainable because I could not even conceive its nature? The restlessness of years was upon me that night. I had returned from a concert, my ears ringing with an applause that should have satisfied the keenest ambition; but not mine, because I knew that my performance had been little more than a display of brilliant technique; the touch of the divine was not in my music. Was it also lacking in my soul?

Such thoughts as these were in my mind as I sat by my fireside, when sleep crept upon me, bringing with it the dream, the manner of it being thus:

I found myself once more a young man, in full enjoyment of the faculties of youth. I was seated at a piano—a full-sized Bluthner—in a room, the memory of which was deeply buried in a past, that forty years of purposeful forgetfulness had completely failed to obliterate from my mind.

It was a long, low, garret-like room, with great beams and joists across its slanting roof, and its two latticed windows looking on to a glorious orchard, and fields beyond. It was the room I had occupied during the first five years of struggle at the foot of the ladder of fame. I could only afford the one room, but it was so capacious that I was able to turn it into two, keeping the end that looked into the orchard for my beloved piano.

I was not alone. While I sat playing melody after melody as the well-loved strains flowed through my mind, Margaret, my wife, stood at the other end of the piano. I can see her now as clearly as I saw her then, her arms resting across the lid of the instrument, her hands folded, her soft brown hair ruffled and tumbling about her shoulders—she had been playing at ‘romps’ with our seven-year-old John—and an ecstasy in her dear eyes filling me with a joy that could but find expression in my music. She stood there for some while, listening, as I played her favourite melodies, until the light of day had faded from the earth. The fire had died to a deep glow, and before it, on a rug, John lay upon his back, lost in his own youthful dreams. Then, as it were, Margaret suddenly came to earth.

‘Why, David,’ she exclaimed as she came and kissed me. ‘Here we are, all in the dark and letting the fire go out!’

In a few moments the scene had changed completely; the room was cheerfully lighted, the curtains drawn across the windows, the fire crackling with all the glee and pudder of a woman gossiping over her garden wall; and Margaret was very busy indeed.

‘Now, come along, John,’ she said. ‘It’s long past bed-time!’

‘Please, mummy, not yet. I’m not tired!’ And John sat up puckering his little eyebrows, hurt and annoyed at the rude and unsympathetic awakening from his dream of glory.

‘John, darling,’ said Margaret gently, ‘you must come now. Three late nights will never do, you know.’

She had spoken with the utmost tenderness and a smile that could not fail to reach a child’s heart. I had expected, as was usually the case, that John, though still protesting that he did not want to go to bed, would nevertheless have followed Margaret quite happily to his little bedroom. But, to my surprise, for his was not a sulky nature, he remained where he was, thrusting his hands into his small pockets with an expression of almost sullen anger upon his face.

'Come along, John,' said Margaret cheerfully, not having noticed his attitude of obstinate resistance.

'Not yet, mummy,' he said firmly, but with his eyes on the ground. 'I can't come yet. I *won't* come yet!' His face flushed and he shut his little mouth tightly, glancing slyly at me out of the corners of his eyes. Margaret looked up in astonishment, for John, as a rule, was an extraordinarily docile child; his expression at that moment was one that seldom crossed his face without some very natural cause. This will never do, I thought; he must not be unreasonable.

'John,' I said, not unkindly, 'you must go to bed when you're told.'

Then he turned on me a look which I shall never forget; his round, childish eyes reproached me with having hurt him deeply, and his little mouth puckered and quivered though he did not cry. Then, as he turned away, he became once more a sullen and obstinate child, and began to shuffle towards the door. I then perceived that he was going to bed without his usual 'Good night,' and I called him back.

'Before you go to bed, John,' said I, 'you must come back here and apologise.' This was perhaps a little too severe a way to speak to him, but I did not understand his unusual attitude and I was pained that he had treated Margaret so.

Once more that look of deep offence; then he turned and went slowly out of the room without a word. (I might here mention that John's room was certainly a part of the dream, for, as I have said, I had only the one room in that house. However, as is the strange way with dreams, this did not strike me as at all extraordinary. In fact, I did not think of it until I awoke and began to ponder upon this experience.)

Margaret went out after him with a look of puzzled anxiety upon her gentle face; and I sat musing. In five minutes she returned, once more calm and smiling. She came over to me and placed her hands upon my shoulders.

'You shouldn't have been angry with him, David,' she said. 'You promised him something, and you forgot.'

'Promised him something?' cried I, astonished.

'Yes, David. The "Hobby Horse."'

Ah! Then I understood.

The 'Hobby Horse,' from Schumann's most delightful 'Scenes from Childhood,' was the one piece of music that John loved.

For him it was the embodiment of all his childish desires. A picture could not have spoken more clearly to him of the glorious irresponsibility, the ecstatic freedom of the horse-rider. It was John's ambition to be 'a soldier on horseback,' as he expressed it.

Yes, now I understood ; for I had indeed promised that John should not be sent to bed without my playing him the 'Hobby Horse.' Hence his wounded look as if I had done him irretrievable wrong. I looked into Margaret's eyes ; they were the eyes of her child, expectant, pleading, full of suspense, and wondering fearfully whether the yet unbroken trust in me was to be remorselessly and cruelly shattered.

Then it was that I knew I must not break my promise to John ; that I must not deceive him ; that if I did so, though he might forgive me, he could not forget. I pictured him in my mind with his reproachful eyes upon me, and I knew that were I to promise him anything again, my word would be received with outward calm, but inwardly with scornful distrust. It would be for John a sure step, never to be retraced, out of the trustful mind of childhood into the disillusionment, inevitable and final, of life in this world. But, is it disillusion ? Is it not rather illusion itself ? The child fresh from God, untouched, unhampered by evil and deceit, who places his undoubting confidence in love, is he not nearer to the truth which is eternal, than when, by slow degrees of so-called disillusionment, he begins to distrust those dear to him, to doubt even love itself ?

I looked at Margaret and smiled : 'Bring him in,' I said. 'It is just like me to forget.'

She went immediately to fetch him, and presently returned leading him by the hand. His little face was flushed and tear-stained, and he glanced shyly at me as if half-expecting a further rebuke. I held out my hands to him, smiling encouragement, and he came to me at once. The next moment, his apprehension had fled, and his eyes shone with delight as I began to play the 'Hobby Horse.' I can see him now, standing beside me, his face alight with eager excitement, moving his small body to and fro with the music. I played it over twice for him, then, clapping his tiny hands, he begged me to let him hear, just once, 'The Soldier's March.' I gave him what he asked. Then John, without a protest, went straight to bed, with a smile on his little features that was not of this world.

I was sitting by the fire pondering over this episode and wishing,

as I glanced round our poor abode, that I had more comfort to give those two whom I loved, when Margaret came back into the room, having watched our little John slip happily into the land of blessed forgetfulness.

‘David,’ she said softly, kneeling down beside me, ‘why so sad?’

‘I was wishing, Margaret,’ I replied, stroking her soft hair, ‘that I had more to give you.’

‘More to give me! Oh, David!’

She said no more than that, but the sweet earnestness of her face was in itself eloquence enough; I knew that she wanted nothing more from me than I had already given her—the sure companionship of love, the gentle intimacy of man and woman that comes not at our command, but is God’s gift alone. As she looked up at me I saw the truth in her clear eyes, and I knew then, that what I had sacrificed for her was nothing in comparison with the deep unchanging joy she had brought within my heart. I thought of myself as I might have been, famous and wealthy, had I chosen to remain unfettered by the bonds of marriage, and weighing these things with the precious gift I possessed in their stead, I marvelled how love can make all else seem insignificant and worthless; how it can make a man humble and ashamed of his unworthiness, and yet can make him proud and grateful for his manhood. And wondering who was I to have been so blessed by God, there came into my mind that phrase of our great writer, Sir James Barrie: ‘They that have known it have passed in and out of heaven.’

Then it was, with the suddenness of change that is the property of dreams alone, that my vision altered. Margaret was gone and I sat alone once more an old man. It was not until I had remained thus, in vague, uneasy mind for some few moments, that I realised that sleep, with the vision, had fled.

Strange indeed was such a visitation to me, for I had never married. Two gifts Heaven offered me in my youth: love and fame. I could have had them both, but love I deliberately thrust from me, knowing that in accepting it I should have to fight for fame with fettered hands and feet.

I chose my freedom. In my unconscious need of that other gift that I despised, I have violated the holy temple of man, but I have missed the sweetest thing on earth.

## TRAMPS IN THE PYRENEES.

BY VERA DART.

### I. ANDORRA.

THE little state of Andorra, once so remote and hidden from the world by its barrier of mountains, bids fair to become one of the most famous beauty spots in the Pyrenees. A good motoring road now runs down the main valley from north to south and, before long, who knows what atrocious buildings will spring up in its wake. As I write the country is still unspoiled. You no longer see the national costume, but nothing mars the beauty of the landscape. Peasants toil in the narrow belt of vivid green through which the river runs, clusters of ramshackle houses cling to the hillside, lovely old stone bridges span the gorge, and, perched on a rock at the most dramatic point of the valley, a rugged little church stands sentinel over the pass.

Mr. Belloc's book, *The Pyrenees*, had inspired us with the wish to walk into Andorra by the Font Argent route; at the same time the book had stressed the difficulty of finding the way and the necessity of carrying three days' provisions in case of being lost. Not being sufficiently intrepid to cope with these conditions of travel, we decided to engage a guide who would, so we hoped, carry most of our impedimenta and make us independent of maps.

We fixed on Luchon as our headquarters because it is as near to the heights as the train will go and it seemed a good starting-place. We were recommended a guide by an agency in Luchon and the manager of our hotel endorsed his character; since he plays an important part in our story, I must here introduce him. Favé was young, not tall, but square-shouldered and very muscular in build. How he kept up his strength I cannot imagine, for he hardly ever seemed to require food and, though he enjoyed a good meal when we got one, he ate surprisingly little. 'J'ai un tout petit estomac,' he explained, and no doubt this is a great blessing to one who is obliged to carry his provisions. At our preliminary interview I suggested Andorra, which I fondly imagined was almost a closed country. He laughed and said, 'All the English want to go to Andorra, it is full of them.' Nevertheless, he seemed delighted at



the idea and it was decided that we should start in three days' time, the interval to be employed by us in short expeditions to get into training and test our walking clothes.

In order to strike the Font Argent Pass, you start from Les Cabannes which is north of Andorra and follow the river Aston. Nobody at Luchon except the guide seemed to have even heard of Les Cabannes. The 'Route des Pyrénées' bus people said they could take us if, as we affirmed, it was on the road between Tarascon and Ax-les-Thermes, but we must pay return fares to Ax and must start at 8 a.m. and arrive at midday. This did not suit us at all and Favé said the road to Les Cabannes was not particularly interesting, so we decided to go by train.

We reached Cabannes in the afternoon. The inn has ceased functioning, but we found rooms opposite a restaurant. Cabannes consists of one long street and has a shopping system all its own. You buy needles from the grocer and postcards from the draper and stamps through the window of the post office after closing time, for the postmistress like everyone else is for ever gazing at the street. There is a lovely river, the Aston, which you meet directly you get clear of the village, from which the hills rise steeply on either side. The most remarkable thing we saw in Cabannes, however, was the statue in the little 'place.' This was a plump female figure nude, except for a wisp of drapery, with a kind of basin on its head. Unfortunately, the sculptor must have failed to satisfy the inhabitants of Cabannes, for someone else had evidently come along and touched it up in faint colours, the result of which was rakish in the extreme. This person had also given it black enamel boots through which its stout toes and sturdy ankles gave an effect which must be seen to be appreciated. It would be interesting to know the history of this figure, for as a public monument it is unique.

Next morning we set forth in the dark along the road and soon turned south by the river Aston. The lower part of the Aston valley is thickly wooded and although the sun had risen we could not actually see it rise, so there was nothing to distract us from the discomfort of the rucksacks and the pangs of hunger. I had asked Favé to buy the provisions, thinking he would know better than I what was the best food to walk on; however, nothing was said and we toiled on for three hours giving a marvellous exhibition of 'le phlegme britannique.' Suddenly he slipped off his sack remarking, 'You would like a banana, *n'est-ce pas*? You had nothing before starting and we shall not breakfast till eleven o'clock.' We

accepted one banana each, but it did little to fill the aching void ; however, it did give me strength to make a speech in French, explaining that in England we make a hearty meal on rising and I therefore proposed to eat at nine o'clock rather than wait until eleven. Favé made no objection, so, at nine, having walked for over four hours, we sat down by the river. The sun was now touching the peaks to gold and we had reached a higher part of the valley which here resembled one of the remoter Cumberland dales in its fresh open greenness, the river chattering over stones, the mountains on either side shutting out the world of men. Our breakfast consisted of hard-boiled eggs, dry bread (how dry I only realised when I found myself dealing with a crust for all the world like a dog gnawing a bone) and a thick slice of dark-grey meat that refused to be bitten, but had to be torn with the grain. No doubt the object of this kind of meal is to prevent you eating too much. It takes so long to consume, that at the end of half an hour, which is the usual allowance, one has really eaten very little. The Aston provided our drink and, though we heard of dysentery from drinking water, we did not suffer.

It is characteristic of the Pyrenees that the chain of mountains maintains a relatively even level and the foot-passes are higher in proportion to the peaks than is usually the case. The top of the pass is called the 'port,' derived I imagine from 'porte,' and indeed the summit of the pass often has the appearance of a doorway in the rock. The drawback to the Font Argent Pass is the extreme length of the valley before the climb to the 'port.' In spite of our early start, the midday sun found us toiling up the steepest part of the ascent which consists of a stiff slope clothed in long grass, extremely tiring at any time and really exhausting after so many hours' going. At the foot of the pass we were joined by a shepherd of eighty who, in spite of his age, not only easily led the party, but talked incessantly. He told us that he had won a prize—and mentioned the sum involved—for having had eleven children. He explained that one of the rules of the—I hardly know whether to call it competition—was that the eleven children were born before he was forty-five, but it was evidently still the peak of his life's story. He also related in detail the fortunes of his offspring, but here I confess my attention wandered, for his French could be understood only by a great effort of concentration. Having surmounted the grass slope we came to a group of mountain lakes from which a sparkling river, well named the Silver Fountain, runs down to join the Aston. Our

new friend still chatted without ceasing till eventually the guide temporarily silenced him by giving him the rest of our meat. Though the old man had no teeth, he attacked this dainty with the greatest relish and, leaving him by the lake, we climbed the last lap to the 'port' and dropped down into Andorra.

In spite of all the French and Spanish can say to decry Andorra, those who have seen it will agree that it needs no apology and no vindication. Wild mountains, narrow gorges, tumbling rivers, lakes, like many-coloured jewels from sparkling sapphire to deepest jade, what more can an ungrateful traveller hope to find. You have only to turn away from the main valley and follow any of the streams that flow into the Valira, to find peace and solitude if you desire them. If on the other hand you are bent on sight-seeing, you will visit the principal town, Andorra la Vielle. Here you will be shown the old court house in an incredible state of dirt and neglect, though it is still in use. Andorra is only nominally independent; actually it belongs to two co-princes, the Bishop of Urgel and the French Government who have inherited the rights formerly owned by the Comte de Foix. The two co-princes nominate representatives who in turn appoint officials, so that the famous Council has very little authority. Some curious customs survive. When a murder is committed, three notabilities visit the corpse and address it as follows: 'Corpse, arise! Justice demands it of Thee.' Since the corpse very naturally does not respond, it is then presumed that he is dead.

The principal industries of Andorra appear to be tobacco and postage stamps. We bought cigarettes labelled 'Lucky Strike, Pure Virginian Tobacco,' but it was common knowledge that the tobacco had been grown in the fields at our feet. When funds are getting low, the Andorrans change the postage stamps; collectors rush in and the exchequer recovers.

There is one large shop in Andorra where with patience you can buy almost anything; there is also a tennis court with an umpire's chair but no back lines; but, most remarkable of all, there is an hotel at Las Escaldas which contains no less than three bathrooms and really hot water. Las Escaldas is only a mile from Andorra la Vielle. It is a busy little place with a constant stream of mules, horses, stray dogs and peasants passing to and fro. All the life of the place is in the street and it is amusing to watch the commotion from the steps of the hotel.

It would be pleasant to spend many days exploring Andorra, but

this our itinerary did not permit. We had one perfect day up in the hills beside the Lakes of Pessons and the following day we regretfully took our leave. We were bound for Espot, which is due west of Andorra, and the guide thought we might save time by taking a 'bus down one valley and up the next. We accordingly took a 'bus from Las Escaldas over the Spanish border to Seo de Urgel.

This little town lies in a fertile plain at the foot of the Pyrenees. To the north rise tier upon tier of mountains bare of all vegetation save occasional belts of pines; to the south, across the river, are three sand-coloured hills surmounted by forts which bear such a striking resemblance to those in Morocco that I fully expected to see the black faces of Senegalese soldiers peering over the ramparts. Between these sandy wastes, the river has created a green oasis in the midst of which stands picturesque Seo with its magnificent cathedral, its narrow tortuous streets and its more modern 'rambla' or boulevard. We ceased to regret that the vagaries of Spanish motor-'buses forced us to wait a day at Seo, and indeed it is well worth a visit, both for its typically Spanish character and the austere beauty of its cathedral.

## II. ROAD TRAVEL IN SPAIN.

Travellers in Spain are well aware that Spaniards are the latest risers in Europe; they refuse to have summer-time though the early morning is even more valuable in their climate than in ours, for the scorching midday sun makes work impossible. This being the attitude of the Spanish people, the time-table of their 'buses presents a complete enigma. They invariably start at 4 a.m. and they provide the only means of travel in the villages. You generally have to change at about 7 a.m. and wait several hours for your connection. It is impossible to get coffee before eight o'clock and you sit for an hour in an hotel dining-room watching the maid slap the chairs with a duster. The window is open to the fresh morning air, but unfortunately Spanish architects invariably put such sanitation as is provided outside the dining-room window, so that if you are wise you shut it on entering the room, and if not, you still shut it before long.

The 'bus from Seo took us along a wildly beautiful gorge which we could only dimly perceive in the half-light and dropped us at 7 a.m. at a little place called Artesa. Here we were to wait till

midday. Favé met a youth on the 'bus whom he introduced with pride as the nephew of the Mayor of Venasque, and this gentleman recommended an hotel for breakfast where we waited for an hour as described above. The Mayor's nephew did not join us, and Favé said he had taken a room and gone to bed; he was evidently an experienced 'bus traveller and knew the ins and outs of the game. We sat on, listening to Favé's opinion of the Spaniards, till all the chairs had been slapped and the floor mopped. We were encouraged by a maid who came with plates and cups. Vain hope! No sign of coffee. The maid informed us there was to be a fête in Artesa that day; perhaps in preparation for this, a woman in the passage was cleaning knives with great vigour. At long last, coffee and milk arrived and three of the largest slices of bread I ever hope to see; each slice was the size of a small oval meat dish and about an inch and a half thick. Butter we received as a matter of course, not realising what a luxury it is in villages. We never saw a whole loaf of bread in this country and I doubt if anyone except the baker ever did. It seems to be sold in chunks measuring a yard or so long and of varying girth.

After breakfast we wandered round the little place and tried to find shade by a stream, but were driven away by mosquitoes; we eventually found that the shady side of the main street was the only possible resting-place, so we braved the stares of the populace and ordered vermouth and soda. Two men at the next table were dipping olives into their vermouth; we ordered some and found that they were stuffed with a very good mixture of anchovy; this refreshment was excellent and most heartening. When the 'bus appeared about twenty minutes late it was packed to the doors, but we were told that a relief 'bus would come shortly and we were much encouraged to find that the Mayor of Venasque's nephew (who had reappeared looking very trim and smart) was going in the same direction as ourselves. Such a distinguished passenger, we felt, would not be left in the lurch.

It was amusing to watch the crowds of people who had turned out for the fête. We were very concerned to see a girl with a double bass apparently waiting for the 'bus—it seemed hardly fair either to the instrument or to the other passengers—however, it turned out that she was only holding it for the owner who was having a drink before joining the rest of the band who were making ready to play. A spirited tune was struck up and the girls and boys joined hands and danced in rings in the street. Their clasped

hands were held up so that their elbows were almost touching and their feet fairly twinkled in the complicated steps of the dance. In the middle of the largest ring was a tiny circle of very small children hopping about to their hearts' content. The dancers were quite oblivious of the blazing sun or indeed of anything else. A car which appeared soon after the dance had begun made no attempt to get through, but waited a good fifteen minutes till the band ceased playing. It was now well after one o'clock and it seemed as though we might as well eat our lunch. We decided to make one more effort about the 'bus and this time addressed a policeman—Would the 'bus soon come?—Yes, indeed! it would be along immediately—Should we have time to lunch first?—Of course we should, there was no hurry at all.

Perhaps one of the reasons why Spaniards are so courteous is that they do not know the meaning of hurry; their time and attention are at your disposal indefinitely. There is no such thing as being late for an engagement, since nobody minds when you arrive. There remains the mystery of the 4 a.m. motor-'bus and the most probable solution appears to be this. The travellers do not get up at 3.30 a.m., they simply do not go to bed, for they know that before long the 'bus will break down or turn them out and then there will be time enough to sleep.

At 2.30 the 'bus actually arrived and we all clambered in, about forty strong. The Mayor's nephew had disappeared at the critical moment and it seemed as though he would be crowded out, but he was eventually accommodated in the first class, though in the previous stage he had been travelling second. These little niceties of class are seldom insisted on beyond the first few miles. It was extremely hot and no sooner had the passengers taken their seats than they began to filter out and in again in the traditional manner. Our section was handicapped by two old women who insisted on sitting next the door and refused to move, with the result that the other passengers had to perform gymnastic feats in order to get out; not that this deterred them. One of the old women proceeded to make a hearty meal. She had brought in a saucepan an omelette, meat and vegetables, also half a loaf of bread, a bottle of wine and a thermos flask.

After nearly an hour's wait, the passengers began to settle themselves and there was a general feeling of hope in the air, as though we really should start before long. At this point, an old priest appeared and began anxiously looking in the 'bus for something

he had lost. It was quite impossible to make anything like an adequate search now that the 'bus was full (as Favé said, '*Cela complique les choses*') ; but the passengers did what they could to help the old gentleman and presently he unearthed a little cardboard cover. Great interest was evinced by everyone at this find and equally great concern that the medicine bottle which it should have contained was nowhere to be seen. At 3.30 we actually started and tore along at a pace that set all the babies crying loudly. We distributed biscuits with great success to the nearest baby, who became a reformed character and crowed cheerfully for the rest of the trip. After two or three hours' travel a shout of triumph went up from one of the old women who had put her hand down the seat cushions and had found the priest's medicine bottle intact. General rejoicing and congratulations to the delighted owner !

We were skirting the foothills of the Pyrenees before reaching the valley which would lead us back into the mountains. The final ridge which divided us from the valley had to be surmounted and, while I live, I shall never forget the pace at which we descended that hill. I am prepared to swear that no ordinary private car could have rounded the hairpin bends at the speed at which we took them without overturning. Nothing but the length of the coach kept it on the road, and nothing but the complete absence of traffic saved us from a head-on crash. The passengers enjoyed it all hugely ; they hung on to the upright poles in the 'bus or were flung from side to side shrieking with laughter as if it were a fun fair. Though we were three and a half hours late in starting, the driver and conductor refreshed themselves at each stopping-place and seasoned travellers, like the Mayor's nephew, got out and strolled about. There was a notice in the 'bus prohibiting smoking and the only people who disregarded this were the driver and a policeman.

We arrived in due course at a place where we were to change. The connecting 'bus had gone, but this problem was solved by making our driver take our 'bus right through. We were to alight at a point half-way between Escalo and Esterri in the Val d'Aran and walk six miles to Espot, which was our destination. We found, however, that the Espot hotel now boasted a car and this vehicle had been sent to meet us. It was now nine o'clock and quite dark. The car was packed with six people, bags, suitcases, crates of soda-water syphons and innumerable sacks, one of which was loaded on the wing. Off we started, but alas ! in less than five minutes the car jibbed and no amount of effort could persuade her to restart.

After so much knocking about, we felt a six-mile walk in the moonlight would be quite refreshing. The driver insisted on borrowing a bicycle and going to Esterri to fetch a taxi, so leaving Favé to look after our things and transfer them to the taxi, Leila and I started walking up a most glorious valley, the moon shining on the river and on the rocks and on the white road we were to take. We had walked about a mile when there was a sudden challenge out of the darkness. 'Halt!' 'Dos Inglese,' I said firmly (being the only Spanish words I knew), and a torch showed the familiar uniform of two Guardia Civil. They seemed satisfied and fortunately did not ask for passports which we had left in the rucksacks. They indicated the road to Espot which at this point branched to the right and mounted a hill in a series of hairpin bends. We were practically at the top of the hill when the taxi overtook us and we reached the hotel just before eleven. It was quite a clean and hospitable inn and gave us an excellent dinner. The dining-room staff had gone to bed and we were waited on by a dreadful little slattern of most unprepossessing appearance who flirted outrageously with the guide, till finally he remarked to us, 'Je vois bien que celle-ci va me faire tromper ma femme.' To which the only possible reply seemed to be: 'Chacun à son goût.'

### III. FROM ENCHANTMENT TO PERDITION.

Our departure from Espot was chiefly remarkable for not taking place at crack of dawn. The only possible lodging for the following night was a large rock which was described by our guide in glowing terms. It appeared that the rock projected overhead and was rain- and wind-proof; we should be extremely comfortable and not at all cold, for he would light a fire. The only drawback to this rock was its situation which was but three hours' walk from Espot and a very long way from our next halting-place; however, such rocks are not to be found on every hillside and we should have a gloriously slack afternoon by the lake of St. Maurice. We were each to carry a blanket borrowed from the hotel and a 'camarade' who would be passing the following day would bring them back for us.

By the time we were ready to start, a party of ladies turned up who were going in the same direction as ourselves. They were escorted by a young man with an orange-coloured bandana knotted round his head who looked as if he had stepped out of the chorus



of 'The Maid of the Mountains.' He had a rucksack, but he insisted on carrying our two blankets and, making nothing of their weight, he leapt up the mountain-path singing blithely. This was a great piece of luck, for a blanket is an inconvenient addition to the rucksack and the path was steep. Having performed this kindly act, the young man drifted off with his party and we saw them no more.

At midday we arrived at one of the most beautiful lakes I have ever seen. High up in the Encantadas (Enchanted Mountains), surrounded with dazzling verdure and dark pines, it would be impossible to imagine a lovelier setting. The twin peaks of the Encantadas are diagonal rather than vertical in contour and this gives them a marvellous wind-swept rhythm, like the draperies in Greek statuary. At the junction of the two peaks are two individual rocks that look like figures and it is easy to understand the popular superstition that these mountains are haunted. All round the lake are other peaks, some near and others melting into the distance, and, when one tires of gazing on the sublime, one's eyes come to rest on the little river which runs out of the lake babbling cheerfully, its green banks striking a pastoral note amid this awe-inspiring grandeur.

We picknicked by the lake and then heard a shout from the other side. Favé was very excited over this. 'C'est mon camarade je vais a son rencontre.' We said he could go on and we would follow slowly round the lake. At the far end were two tiny tents in which we had taken little interest. We now learned that some French people were camping there and Favé's 'camarade' was their guide. He gave us a message to the effect that they had invited us to supper and were looking forward to meeting us, so we duly put in an appearance. They were perfectly charming and had often been in England though they did not speak English. We were happily gossiping and the lady was stirring something that smelt very good in an enormous saucepan when it actually began to rain, the first rain we had seen in the Pyrenees. We fled for shelter to our rock and watched a thunderstorm that lasted over an hour. The changes of cloud shadows on lake and mountain were most lovely and our rock was as weather-proof as Favé had described it. What we should have done had the wind blown from the opposite quarter, I tremble to think. Owing to the rain, it became colder and the guides lit an enormous fire at one end of the rock, feeding it with pine logs, thus supplying the one touch

that had been lacking to make it Brünnhilde's rock out of *Die Walküre*.

The storm obligingly ceased before supper-time and we descended to enjoy the hospitality of our new friends. They probably saved our lives, for we were given a hot meal which finished with rum punch, so that we were thoroughly warm by the time we clambered up the hillside to our rocky couch. The guides had collected straw which had been left by a camping party and a ground-sheet had been lent by our friends. We were to have all three blankets over us and Favé would share a down quilt with his comrade.

Readers of Mr. Belloc's book, *The Pyrenees*, will remember that he recommends walkers to choose a rock for their night's shelter rather than a hut. From this I gather that he has not been obliged to lie all night with another man's head on his feet. Considering the amount of straw that had been spread, it was reassuring to find that the guides were to sleep in front of the fire, but, since the rock was about a foot shorter than our combined heights, no doubt they thought that by pinioning our feet they would avoid bruises on the head. The discomfort of this arrangement can better be imagined than described. Had we been Walküre of operatic proportions we might have been tolerably comfortable, but this kind of camping is emphatically not to be recommended to the tall and thin. We consoled ourselves as best we might with a wonderful view of stars and an occasional gleam of moonlight on the lake.

Next morning we climbed a steep pass with many a backward look at the lake and descended the valley of St. Nicholas. We passed a chain of lakes and breakfasted near the first one, which was the prettiest. After this, the valley gradually became narrower and less interesting and the path broadened into a mule-track made of loose stones, cruelly hard on the feet. Favé was uncertain how far it was to Castelljon, the place which we hoped to reach for the night, but about two o'clock we came to a village called Bohi, and, having walked for six hours, not counting our halt, we went to the inn in search of food. The entrance, as usual in these places, consisted of a barn full of sacks. There was a very dark room leading out of it in which some men were eating, but we were taken upstairs to a fairly clean room where we waited an hour while food was prepared. It consisted mainly of soup and vegetables including some dangerous-looking mushrooms that our guide had picked on the way. The landlady assured us that they were poisonous, but Favé, treating us to another harangue on the ignor-

ance of the Spaniards, insisted that they be cooked and we ate them with impunity.

I was in favour of hiring mules for the next stage to help us over the stones, but there were none to be had at Bohi, so there was nothing for it but to tramp another four hours to Villaje. By that time it would be dark, but we might there hire mules who do not mind the dark for the remaining three hours to Castelljon. The path from Bohi to Villaje was more interesting and led us over the shoulder of a mountain with a magnificent panorama of distant hills and flying clouds tinted by the evening light. It was growing rapidly dark as we descended and it seemed most unlikely that we should get beyond Villaje. The guide assured us that it was quite usual to spend the night on a mule. We should be sitting, he explained, in a kind of armchair on the mule's back and could sleep in perfect comfort. I can't say that the idea of a mule instead of a bed roused us to any enthusiasm—we felt that if you really want to enjoy the luxury of a night on a mule, it is a mistake to spend the previous night under a rock—however, when we reached Villaje the question was decided by the muleteer, who flatly refused to go. It appeared that it was five hours to Castelljon and his mules had to be at work the next day. We had walked not less than fifty kilometres (over thirty miles) on top of an almost sleepless night, so it was obvious that we must accept whatever hospitality we could find at Villaje.

This was of the most unpromising description. Upon entering the barn which formed the ground floor of the inn, we found it inhabited by a pig. There was nothing to prevent this animal from coming upstairs, but it was apparently prejudiced against stair-climbing and preferred to remain below. We mounted to the dining-room and our hearts sank. Against a filthy wall was a long table covered with greasy oilcloth and a mass of crumbs and flies. Dirty children crawled over the floor, crying loudly. All the village had assembled to stare at us, but the only clean face to be seen was the smiling countenance of a priest who lived at this inn. The landlady brought vermouth and olives and we had some grapes with us. She also produced a piece of what she called sausage that looked for all the world like a knot of wood. We were not hungry, but I confess I was somewhat depressed. Leila was in wonderful spirits and was conducting a complicated business deal with the priest for cigarettes which he wanted to give her and which she was equally determined to pay for.

Eventually the dreaded moment could no longer be postponed. We were taken to a large guest chamber with two alcoves behind thick lace curtains. Each alcove contained a very large bed which looked surprisingly clean. On the wall of the room hung an alarming picture representing the Madonna and Child in a yellow patch of light, while below them, in red flames, a number of figures, including an old man with a white beard, writhed in torment. With an uncomfortable feeling that this might be prophetic, we retired to bed.

#### IV. THE END OF THE JOURNEY.

The night at the inn at Villaje was passed with no ill effects so far as we were concerned. How we were spared remains a mystery, for the unfortunate guide assured us that he woke up with creatures crawling over his face and he spent the rest of the night sitting up and smoking in self-defence. In the morning he found that rats had eaten the hems of his trousers.

The distance from Villaje to Castelljon, which according to our original information was three hours' walk, was now declared to be not less than seven hours. Two men who were going part of the way volunteered to show us a short cut. One was a gentleman in a grey lounge suit and checked cap who carried a large umbrella which he unfurled as a protection against the sun. We were surprised throughout the Pyrenees to notice the popularity of the umbrella; shepherds always carry a large one and camp under it in wet weather and it even figures in the Andorran coat of arms. Our companions were going for a week's cure to a watering-place and the umbrella constituted the whole of their luggage. The 'short cut' consisted in ignoring the zigzags by which our path ascended the hill and climbing it perpendicularly. This was extremely hot work though it had the merit of avoiding the stones on the track. At the top of the steepest bit, our leader noticed a tree with one apple left on it. The three men thereupon could not resist throwing stones at it, though it was quite obvious that a hit would knock it over a wall into a field. We thankfully rested while they displayed their skill. After several tries, the gentleman with the umbrella eventually broke the twig and of course sent the apple rolling miles down the hill. We all applauded this feat, though for our part rather half-heartedly, for naturally it was the signal for us to go on.

We were in the foothills bordering on the Pyrenees, the slopes of which were for the most part pasture covered with autumn crocus. The villages in this part of the country are built like forts, the houses closely packed round the little church in the centre. Very picturesque they are in the distance clinging to the hillside, many of them no bigger than the hut circles one sees on Dartmoor. We never saw a straggling village; no doubt the compact plan was originally for defence either against man or beast. At the top of the second ridge, we halted for a meal by the side of a stream and parted from our companions whose road here diverged from ours. We were still rather tired after our thirty miles the previous day and I again suggested mules at the next opportunity.

We soon came to a village called Las Paoles situated on the top of the ridge commanding a delightful view of green farmlands and distant hills. Mules were not available, but a farmer, wishing no doubt to make up for this deficiency, asked us into his house and gave us excellent wine, nuts and a kind of stale sponge cake with holes in it. In the kitchen were two women and a girl. Our host who spoke French explained with pride that this was his daughter who had just had her first baby. A withered old crone with a black handkerchief tied round her head was introduced as the 'sage femme' who had attended the birth. It was explained that she had never been trained in any way, but we were assured that she was so gifted that training was quite superfluous. We asked to see the 'nouveau né,' and he was brought down, his little crumpled face surmounted by an enormous bonnet made of countless layers of thick ruched ribbon. We seized the opportunity to make some return for their hospitality that would not give offence and pressed upon the young mother a trifle with which to buy a little frock or coat as a birthday present to the baby. The 'sage femme' was following this closely, and I only hope she did not pounce upon our small gift, the moment our backs were turned.

Feeling much heartened by our kind reception we resumed our hot and stony way to Castelljon, which we reached in the late afternoon. This little market town lies in a most lovely valley and has a nice broad street quite unlike the villages we had passed. The inn was beautifully clean and provided an excellent dinner, after which we were treated to a liqueur from Montserrat by an old gentleman who said he had been in England. We were also presented with a copy of *The National Geographical Magazine* by

the local vet., a charming person who had been laboriously teaching himself English and was delighted to practise on us.

We were nearing the end of the tour and our last walk was to be from Ordessa in the Arazas valley over the Brèche de Roland to Gavarnie, from whence we could take a train back to Luchon. It seemed that in order to get to Ordessa we must once more take a 'bus which of course left Castelljon at 4 a.m., but this time we actually had coffee before starting. Favé was rather vague about the route, but he talked a great deal about a place called Grauss which seemed to be of some importance. About 7 a.m. we arrived at this place and, since further information as to transport was extremely vague, we decided to try and hire a car. We found a very good car, quite new, which took us to Ordessa, but we shall always remember Grauss as the place where our modest purchase of one stamp was carefully wrapped in paper by the postmaster before being handed to us.

The Arazas valley is quite unlike most of the Pyrenean valleys. The mountains here are gigantic cliffs and huge fortresses, more impressive than beautiful. This district forms part of a National Park in which hunting and shooting are forbidden. Outside the inn at Ordessa is a depressed-looking stuffed animal, a kind of chamois, said to be the last of its particular breed; this, no doubt, accounts for its attitude of deep dejection. The day after our arrival at Ordessa the weather broke; sheets of rain descended, the hills were blotted out, and the depressed chamois was huddled up in sacks. Fortunately we were at a very comfortable inn kept by people who did not grudge a fire. Though it was only a tiny place the guests were of four different nationalities: English, French, Spanish and German. The Spaniards and the Germans departed soon after breakfast, leaving the rest of us prowling unhappily about as is the custom of walkers deprived of their exercise. We were all gazing gloomily out of the window when a pony galloped by, carrying a man with a large open umbrella. This exhibition of horsemanship raised our spirits considerably and the French people were sufficiently heartened to ask for a pack of cards.

We intended crossing the mountains to Gavarnie by the famous Brèche de Roland. You must know that Roland, the hero of Charlemagne's campaign against the Moors, was the first 'alpinist.' On one occasion he was lost in the mountains and, completely exhausted, lay down to die. Fearing that his sword might fall into infidel hands, he dashed it against the rock, but the Christian's

sword was mightier than the hard rock and cleft it asunder, making a breach which disclosed to Roland the descent to the French plains.

A wet day in the Pyrenees does not indicate a permanent break in the weather. The next day was glorious and we started soon after five, joining forces with the French party of four and their guide. The great excitement about the climb was that we had to pass what are known as 'crampons.' These are iron stakes driven into the rock, giving hand and foothold where there would otherwise be none. If any of us were nervous about this, the two guides could take one across at a time while the others waited. Actually this place was only a few yards long and did not present any serious difficulty, though it would be foolish for a novice to attempt it without a guide. As we began to climb, the rising sun climbed with us, touching rock and peak, making them glow in turn against the sky. At the top of the first waterfall was a comparatively flat 'jasse' or basin which we crossed, then up again, every hundred feet revealing more and more ridges on the horizon. The cliffs that had frowned on us when we were in the valley were now seen to be buttresses of mountains the peaks of which became gradually visible as we ascended. High above us, blocking the way to Luchon, was the giant mass of the Mont Perdu. Before the last pull to the 'port' or summit of the pass, we crossed another green 'jasse,' and at this altitude of over eight thousand feet, a flock of several hundred sheep were feeding. We lunched in hot sun before crossing the 'port' and, if any of us had felt any qualms over the route, we were more than rewarded by the magnificent panorama before our eyes. The sky vied with the mountains in beauty and little white clouds of softest down danced on the ridges, like snow fairies into whose realm we had wandered. The 'port' here is very characteristic, like a huge gateway in the rock; we crossed it from south to north and came to a long drift of snow. After negotiating two snow slopes, we found ourselves on the top of a cliff that forms part of the Cirque de Gavarnie.

A feature of the Pyrenees, seen from the French side, is the formation called 'cirque,' which consists of a huge semicircle of mountains forming a gigantic amphitheatre; the Cirque de Gavarnie is one of the most famous. We proceeded down the face of it by a zigzag path and arrived at Gavarnie itself, the most trippery place in the Pyrenees.

We had descended in a few short hours from the sublime to the ridiculous. People of all ages and sizes were to be seen mounting

ponies and mules with the aid of step-ladders and being carried to the foot of the mountains. It was indeed good-bye to mountain solitude, to the simple life, to adventure, to all that had made our tour unusual and fascinating. Good-bye, rocky peaks and smiling valleys, lonely lakes and rushing rivers ; good-bye, kindly farmers and garrulous shepherds. Good-bye, Spain, land of sunshine, your charm more than compensates for your vagaries. Good-bye—good-bye—— But Favé will have none of this sentimental leave-taking. Already he is planning a tour for next summer, for we have not, he assures us, seen the best of the mountains ; this year the valleys, next year the heights. No regrets then, for we have stored up sunshine and laughter with which to cheer many a dull winter's day, and another summer will assuredly see us back again, drawn by the magic of the Pyrenees.

*TO-NIGHT, UNSUNG.*

To-NIGHT, unsung the moon must shine,  
Unkept, the misted stars, the deep  
Unrhymed, beat on the horizon-line,  
Unwatched, the valleys sleep ;

Unread, the silvery runes of night,  
And midnight candle, still unburned,  
Must weave a shadowy flame to light  
The pillows of love, unturned.

ETHEL ANDERSON.

*Turramurra, New South Wales.*



## *WALKING—AND SOME OF ITS FAMOUS VOTARIES.*

BY JAMES KERR.

THE first three decades of the twentieth century might very appropriately be termed 'the speed age.' It requires an Indian mystic like Tagore to tell us what we are losing in this frantic rush after wealth, fame, position, pleasure. A blend of the Oriental and the Occidental might very well constitute the ideal atmosphere in which to live, move, and have one's being. But are signs not appearing now, that the pendulum is commencing its backward swing, and that we are beginning, dimly yet of course, to perceive that true wisdom lies in 'making haste slowly.'

It may not seem of tremendous import, but possibly nothing is more reassuring in this respect, than the present-day revival of the ancient art of walking. By this, I do not mean simply walking a few city blocks, in preference to taking the street car, or walking instead of motoring to the railway station, to catch the morning train to town—but walking, tramping, hiking, call it by whatever name you like, for the sheer joy and love of it. In Britain, this renaissance has been very marked for some years past, and it is now spreading over our Western Continent also. Residing as I do on the British Columbia Coast, it is my good fortune to see every week-end, the year through, groups of young men and women (and some older ones too) heading for the trail, leading to some mountain cabin or other, and thereby laying up a store of health and vitality for the week, whether spent in the university, school, business office, or elsewhere.

There are two distinct classes of hikers or walkers—those who fare forth for the day, turning their faces homeward at night-fall; and the others, who might be termed the advance guard in the Movement, who take to the road for a week or two, and even longer, at a stretch. This class, as we know, is being encouraged in England and Scotland, by the establishment of hostels, conducted on a simple scale, in parts of the country, away from the main roads, and inaccessible to ordinary vehicular traffic. These hostels provide bed and breakfast at a modest charge, as well as affording facilities for doing one's own cooking, should one be

so minded; and the number of such places is being increased yearly.

Walking has always had its distinguished votaries, and we are in good company when we take it up. In Trevelyan's *Clio*, the reader can almost literally feel the wind on his face. Carlyle was an untiring walker, and he often went alone in the silence of the moors and the hills. Starting forth on one occasion, in the early dawn, from Muirkirk in Ayrshire, he made his way through the heather of the Lowther Hills, reaching Dumfries, late in the evening—a good four-and-fifty miles. Wordsworth, residing in the mountainous Lake District of England, was also an inveterate walker. His friend, De Quincey, held that with these identical legs, Wordsworth must have traversed a distance that would have taken him seven times around the world, adding that to this mode of exercise, 'he was indebted for a life of unclouded happiness, and we, for much of what is most excellent in his writings.' The countrymen of Wordsworth have ever been noted for mountain-climbing. James Bryce may stand as a type of these, whether he was striding up Mount Ararat, making the summit of the Basuto Hills, or threading the trails of the New Hampshire uplands. Hudson also holds a high place among famous walkers. The hills, moors and beech-woods of England, and the stern reaches of Cornwall live and breathe in his books. Emerson's Monadnock is notable, but Thoreau might be reckoned the very best of our American walkers, and the worthiest recorder of the enduring worth of walking. His wandering through the White Mountains breathes the very spirit of the ancient hills. The pilgrimage along Cape Cod and the ascent of Katahdin are both deeply interesting. Even more characteristic of his spirit are the walks about his own Concord, for which he has wrought an enduring monument.

There are various *schools* of walking. One school is that of the road-walkers who may be termed 'the Puritans of the religion,' yet they number at least two poets among them, and Stevenson is their chief bard:

'Boldly he sings, to the merry tune he marches.'

Of the many poets who were walkers, it is however difficult to judge how many were road-walkers. Shakespeare seemed to prefer the footpath way, with stiles, to either the high road or the moor. Wordsworth preferred the lower fell tracks, above the high roads and below the tops of the hills. Shelley, we can easily think of,

as bursting over or through all obstacles cross-country ; he used to roam at large over Shotover and in the Pisan forest. Coleridge is known to have walked alone over Scafell, but he also seems to have experienced something of the sensations of night-walking on roads :

‘ Like one that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round, walks on  
And turns no more his head ;  
Because he knows a frightful fiend  
Doth close behind him tread.’

Keats, Matthew Arnold, and Meredith were ‘ mixed walkers ’—on and off the road. It is somewhat remarkable that Edward Bowen, who wrote the Harrow Songs, left no walking songs, though he himself was the king of the roads.

The road-walkers may be said to have grasped but one part of the truth. The road is invaluable for space and swing, and the ideal walk necessitates a smooth surface for a considerable part of the way. On the other hand, the sweet beauties of nature are unveiled only to the cross-country walker. On the road we never meet ‘ the moving accidents by flood or field ’ ; the sudden glory of a woodland glade ; the old farmhouse sequestered deep in rural solitude ; the deep, slow-flowing stream, that we must jump, or wander along to find the bridge ; the autumnal dew on the bracken and heather, and the blue smoke curling upwards from the cottage, in the quiet of the early dawn. These and a thousand other chances are the very heart and essence of walking, but they do not belong to the road. In the ideal walk, the hard road plays its own part, generally at the beginning and at the end.

In starting out on a real hiking *trip*, there is of course the physical side to think of. Food, equipment, care of health have all to be considered, but these things you teach yourself. For the rest, Nature becomes your teacher, and from her you will learn who you are, and what is your special quest in life, and whither you should go. You relax in the presence of the great healer and teacher, you turn your back on civilisation, and most of what you have learned in schools and colleges. Your intellectual sustenance is manna, vouchsafed to you daily, miraculously. You hold your hands for hidden gifts, you listen with new zest to the song of the birds, and the murmuring song of trees and streams.

From day to day you keep your log, and you may look on it at first as a mere record of travel, but something else cannot fail to be entering into it, and you will soon have the inborn realisation that you are gradually becoming an artist in life; you are experiencing the real delights of the age-old art of walking, and that it is giving you an artist's joy in creation. Don't fall down on your note-taking. It may become precious to you later on. A thought recorded, one that is essentially your own, written down on the day when it occurred, is a mental snapshot, and who knows, it may prove to be the corner-stone of an edifice you may build later. Then there are the 'far-ben' thoughts, recorded, but intended for no other eyes. These may turn out to be healing balm some day when life's sky appears drear.

In one of his essays, Hazlitt remarks—'One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey, but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out-of-doors, nature is company enough for me. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road (mark you, *winding*) before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I shout for joy.' On the other hand, says Sterne—'Give me a companion by the way, be it only to mention how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines.'

In a general way, the consensus of opinion is in favour of companionship, and there is possibly no greater test of friendship than in going on a walking-tour together. You discern in one another all the egoisms and selfishnesses you possess. But there are rewards. If you do not quarrel and part on the road, you will find your friendship greatly deepened by the experience of the wilds together. Tramping together makes you self-revelatory. You comment on nature, books, people, but almost inevitably you talk of yourself. If it happens to be camping out at nights, there is a time of great confidence after the camp-fire has been lit, the coffee brewed, the sleeping-place laid out. You sit by the embers of the fire, as the twilight deepens and the stars come out. This is *the time* of confidences.

The chief urge of the wander-spirit is curiosity—the desire to know what is beyond the next turning of the road. Like the prospector for gold, the born wanderer is always expecting to come upon something very wonderful—just beyond the horizon's rim. Going on and on, in a line of route, has its drawbacks. Some-

one has said that 'the world is not a straight line, not even a crooked line, but an area, a great broad surface.' Similarly, life may be described as being not a chain of units, but an area spreading out from a hidden centre. So in making a halt for a day or two, in my journeyings, in order the better to study my surroundings, I have not ceased living, merely because I have ceased going forward. Halting-places invariably form a pleasant and a profitable 'break.'

Never start on a walking-tour without an author whom you love. On such a tour, it is clear that one cannot carry many books; as Stephen Graham, that indefatigable traveller in many lands, puts it: 'You could not well take the volumes of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, even were you so disposed.' One or possibly two favourite books should, however, be taken. Under the new conditions, you will come into a deeper and more intimate kinship with the book and its author, than could be obtained otherwise. For example—for a little while after supper of an evening, you may be in the seventh heaven, with a scene of *Henry IV*, a chapter of Carlyle, the incisive witticisms of Doctor Johnson, or your own favourite novelist. Their wit and poetry acquire an added richness from your then condition, and that evening they seem to surpass themselves. Then after laying down the volume, go out and watch the stars.

Even if only in a small measure, the hiker is a pilgrim. His adventure is a spiritual adventure, or it is nothing. It has often been remarked that nothing in the present ever seems so good as that which is past, and this experience comes to us all at times. Some years pass, and a *present* which is silver to-day, becomes golden in retrospect. It may be that you lie down in a matter-of-fact mood, to sleep under the canopy of the stars, on the broad plains, or in the heart of the mountains; you may ask for nothing beyond a good night's sleep. But perhaps years later, you look back with a sigh, and say: 'How wonderful it was; I was happy then.' Yet despite the passage of the years, why should the earlier experience not be an oft-recurrent one? Let us catch the spirit of renascence, as Nature comes to meet us in joyous robes, and with beckoning gestures. Let us exult and sing with Browning:

'Morning's at seven;—  
All's right with the world.'

And to quote a poet of to-day :

‘ So follow the road over the hilltops and down,  
 There’ll be meadow and bushland and ridges of brown,  
 There’ll be dawns when the earth is a-quiver with light,  
 There’ll be friendship and laughter and camp-fires at night,  
 The shine of a mountain, the gleam of a sail,  
 And home like a star—at the end of the trail.’

*Vancouver, B.C.*

### THE LOVER AND THE POET.

‘ WHAT have I done,’ the Lover cried—  
 —Love is so seldom wise—  
 ‘ That other men should dwell on Earth,  
 And I—in Paradise !’

‘ What have I done,’ the Lover cried—  
 —Love had not served him well—  
 ‘ That other men should dwell on Earth,  
 And I, in deepest Hell !’

Yet from this little Lover’s soul,  
 So lonely, so forlorn,  
 His rapture, and his agony,  
 A Poet’s soul was born.

E. M. HIVES.

*MR. CASSIDY AGAIN.*<sup>1</sup>

BY GERALD FITZGERALD.

UNLESS one goes forth and catches them for one's self, fish, in the west of Ireland, are generally very difficult to procure. It was therefore with considerable pleasure and surprise that, on coming in to lunch one warm August afternoon, I saw my wife Phillida standing with obvious pleasure before a generous centre cut of a magnificent salmon.

'Splendid, my dear,' I said, 'how on earth did you get it? I thought they were unobtainable. Anyhow the price must have been——'

'Oh, you needn't worry about the price, George,' she answered calmly; 'this is part of a presentation salmon, a good fifteen pounds too.'

'Who on earth gave us that?' I queried; 'was it as a gift, a bribe, or conscience money?'

'A gift I should say, dear. Your friend Mr. Cassidy brought it up this morning. I met him on the avenue.'

'Corny the cute,' said I. 'How the deuce did he come by a salmon? Clever as he is, and wicked as he undoubtedly is, I never thought poaching was in his line. Besides, the only place near here where there are any salmon is the Carna river and there's nearly a water-bailiff to every yard of it, it's so full of fish. That kind of thing isn't Corny's method at all. Brains off stage is his plan. The power in the background.'

'I asked him,' said Phillida, 'but though he was very affable he evaded the point, so I thanked him and left it at that. Thank him again if you see him, George.'

'I certainly shall see him,' I answered; 'good as this salmon certainly is, I imagine the way Corny got hold of it is even better. I'll go down and look him up to-morrow.'

Fate however intervened in the shape of an urgent business letter from my Dublin solicitors which necessitated my leaving Carna that night, and it was not until near the end of the following week that I was able to shake the dust of the city off my feet and come home.

<sup>1</sup> 'Mr. Cassidy' first appeared in CORNHILL in April, 1936.

‘Well, dear,’ said Phillida, when, our greetings over and the Dublin business discussed, we were able to turn our minds to home affairs, ‘such a lot has been going on in Carna since your departure. It’s funny we didn’t hear before you left, but news reaches us slowly. It seems that the day before you left, on the holiday, someone was drowned, or is supposed to have been drowned in the big pool below Carna bridge, and late that night Peggy Farrell and another girl saw his ghost and heard it screaming. The whole district is full of it and no one will go near Carna bridge after dark alone.’

‘I wonder what the truth of the yarn is,’ I said. ‘I’ll go down and see Corny to-morrow. He might know, and anyhow I want to hear about that salmon.’

On the following afternoon I strolled down to Corny. I found him sitting on the wall of his pig-sty, peacefully smoking and watching the feeding of his old sow.

‘Good day, Corny,’ I hailed him. ‘How are things with you?’

‘Badly, Master George, badly. I’m hard put to feed my little pig.’

‘Well, Corny, I’ve come down to thank you for that very excellent salmon. Where did you get it, Corny?’

‘It come by chance, Master George. ’Tis grand weather for the hay, so it is. I had to take an’ cut an extra field of hay this year as I hadn’t enough on me own little bit of land to feed all me beasts over the winter.’

‘What field did you take?’ I asked, seeing once again that it was useless to press the most skilful dissembler in the west.

‘Oh, down by Carna bridge, Master George.’

‘Carna bridge! What’s all this about ghosts and drownings down there, Corny?’

Corny eyed me imperturbably.

‘Poor hay it is, too. Young Pat Doolan was cutting the next bit to me.’

‘Pat Doolan,’ I said. ‘Glad to hear he’s doing a bit of work. He’s the biggest poacher in the barony. Got a month last time he was up, didn’t he?’

‘He did so, the poor lad, though he’s no friend to me, since that trouble I had with the Doolans over that horse I sold his pa. Still, ’twas hard on the boy. Him to be cutting hay beside the big pool all the week. An’ the salmon lying there by the hundred.’



The water was that low their backs was nearly out of the water, an' every time young Doolan would walk over towards the bank with a hay fork who wouldn't he see but one of them damn bailiffs watching him.'

'The bailiffs know too much about Pat Doolan,' I said.

'Well, Master George, it fair broke his heart, an' I had it in me to pity him' (I wonder, thought I; your sorrow for others generally helps yourself); 'an' I met him one evening leanin' over the bridge an' watching the fish in the pool below.

'“Good evening, Pat,” says I.

'“Good evening, Mr. Cassidy,” says he.

'“There's a power of fish down there,” sez I.

'“Be damn to them, but there are,” sez he; “there are more there now too than in the afternoon.”

'“Oh,” says I, “some of them likely slips in under the bridge for shelter when the sun's very strong. 'Tis a fine bridge, Pat. I mind when 'twas built more than forty years ago. Very overgrown it is too with all them bushes on the bank an' that hanging ivy. The man what built it med a grand job of it. Very wide foundations to the centre arches. Made the centre buttresses so thick that when he wanted to run up the arches he didn't need to do them so wide, so he left a little ledge about a foot wide on each side of the centre arch. I suppose with the dry weather they'd be about a foot above the water-level. 'Tis funny how they don't show from above or from the banks. Well well, how time goes when an old man gets talking. I doubt is there a man in Carna would know or mind that. I must be going along, Pat Doolan, for we'll not be working to-morrow, seeing 'tis the holiday an' I have one or two things to finish.”

'Next morning, Master George, I was up before dawn, for I remembered I'd left me hay fork down near Carna—an'——'

'Cassidy,' said I, 'tell the truth and shame the devil, you expected to find more than a hay fork.'

Mr. Cassidy eyed me reproachfully and continued:

'Well, when I got near the bridge, who did I see but young Pat Doolan slipping along with what looked damn like a gaff in his hand, so I watched him to see what he'd do. Well, he creeps down to the bushes below the bridge and then starts to undress himself, taking off all except his shirt. He then hides his clothes in the bushes and starts to wade out towards the main arch, about three feet deep it was, an' in with him under the bridge. Sez I

to myself, you'll have the long wait, Pat Doolan, for the fish'll not go under the bridge till near midday, and you'll have the job to get out till late to-night. However, 'twill be a very hot day, so ye'll not be too bad. I expect, Master George, he'd not thought much of how he'd come out, being so set on a salmon. Well, I went home again an' I didn't come back to the bridge till near one o'clock. On me way to the bridge who did I meet but Johnny Farrell over from Rossmore mountain to see his sister.

"Good day to you, Johnny," sez I.

"Good day, Corny," sez he.

"Grand weather for the hay," sez I, "though signs by it looks terrible like rain before night."

"Rain," sez Johnny. "Rain, there was a cloud-burst up in the hills above Rossmore last night that I never saw the like of. 'Tis a wonder the Carna's not coming down in a big flood by now, so it is."

"I expect the mills above are holding it back," sez I, "but they'll be letting it go presently." That's the way they do on the Carna, Master George, hold the water for a bit an' then let her go with a rush, especially this time o' year when they're not looking out for a flood. Many's the time I've seen the river dead low an' clear an' then a roar an' a rush an' a wall o' water a foot high would come down an' she'd be in a brown flood before ye could wink.

"'Tis likely," sez Johnny; "well, good-bye, Corny, I must go along to me sister."

'Well, I went on down to the bridge an' the more I thought of young Pat Doolan roosting like a hen on that ledge under it, the more I laughed, but that wasn't the best of it. I was leaning over the bridge talking to one or two of the neighbours when I heard the roar of the water coming down.

"Begob," sez Timsey Doyle. "Here's the flood, boys." Well, it went through the bridge like a flash an' sez I to myself: "That's about up to your knees now, Pat Doolan, you'll be lucky if it doesn't rise above your waist."

'Well, we stayed a bit talkin' an' watching it, an' presently some of the children came along an' started playing about along the bank. Well, you know children, Master George, there's nothing they don't see an' doesn't wan of them find Pat Doolan's clothes. Well, he lets a roar out of him an' pulls them out from under the bush. Everyone jumps up.

“ ‘Begob,’ sez Timsey Doyle. “ ‘Something’s happened here ; come an’ we’ll look,” so we all ran down to the children.

“ ‘What’s this at all ? ’ sez Johnny Driscoll ; “ ‘someone has been drowned. He must ha’ gone in swimmin’ in the pool in his shirt. Whose clothes are they at all, Timsey ? ’ ”

‘ Timsey looks at them careful. “ ‘Tis new good clothes they are too,” sez he. “ ‘But there’s five hundred suits like this being worn to-day in Carna an’ no name to them but Matt Doyle, tailor, Cranmore, where all the lads get their Sunday suits. Let’s see if we can find anything that’ll tell us in the pockets.’ ”

‘ Well, they searched the clothes, but divil the thing could they find but a half-empty packet of fags an’ a box of matches. Nothing else. Now, I was watching the bridge an’ didn’t I see young Doolan’s head for a second come out round the buttress an’ then back in again, an’ I hurt meself trying not to laugh.

“ ‘There’s bad work here, Johnny,” sez Timsey. “ ‘Away you on your bicycle as fast as you can to Cranmore an’ get the guards. ’Tis their job.’ ”

‘ So Johnny Driscoll went away off on his bike as hard as he could pelt an’ the rest of us stayed at the bridge. Ye see I could say nothing, Master George, it would have been three months without the option for young Pat Doolan if he’d been caught after salmon again, to say nothing of his being the joke of Carna for the rest of his life. Well, you know how news spreads ; by the time Johnny Driscoll comes back with the sergeant an’ two guards there must have been a couple of hundred people on the spot.

‘ The sergeant he comes down an’ he examines the clothes.

“ ‘No clues here,” sez he. “ ‘Tis so we’ll have to try an’ find the body, likely the poor fellow will be below in the pool ; we’ll have to start an’ drag for him.’ ”

‘ Well, Master George, better sport I never saw than watching them guards drag the river. They had no proper drags like, but only home-made contrivances. I must say they recovered quite a lot. Old pots an’ pans an’ bits of wood. A dead dog that Con Clancy had drowned an’ all sorts of things. What with people trying to help them an’ getting in the way, didn’t the sergeant end by getting shoved in by Timsey Doyle. ’Twas better than a circus an’ it went on till nine o’clock that night. Finally the sergeant says : “ ‘Tis no use, boys ; take the clothes up to the barracks an’ put enquiries round everywhere to see who is missing.’ ” After the guards had gone people stayed about for nearly another hour

an' then they began to drift off to their homes. Finally about eleven o'clock there was no one left except meself. I'd gone off about nine, but I came back again later an' hid in the bushes where Pat Doolan had put his clothes as I wanted to see the end of it. 'Twas near dark by then, but you could still see. Well, about ten minutes after out from the centre arch comes me bold Pat, an' begob he'd done well; cold as he was, he had four grand salmon. I waited till he'd climbed up the bank an' then I thought I'd speak to him like an' tell him all the fun he'd caused, but—no' sooner did I step out from the bush beside him, 'tis probable he thought I was the bailiff, than he gave a yell, dropped the fish an' away off over the country as hard as he could run with his white shirt flapping out behind him; then I heard the most horrible screech from the road an' another screech ('twas Peggy Farrell an' Mary Doyle going home). The two girls thought they'd seen a ghost an' away off with them down the road screaming as they ran. That's all the ghost part of it, Master George,' said Corny, knocking out his pipe, 'but better keep it close. I'm glad you enjoyed the salmon.'

*W. Ireland.*

### THE RUNNING BROOKS.

- The War of the Guns* : Aubrey Wade (Batsford, 7s. 6d. n.).  
*Journey to the Western Front : Twenty Years After* : R. H. Mottram (Bell, 7s. 6d. n.).  
*The rôle of British Strategy in the Great War* : C. R. M. F. Cruttwell (Cambridge University Press, 3s. 6d. n.).  
*The American Ideal* : Arthur Bryant (Longmans, 10s. 6d. n.).  
*The Desert Fathers : Translations from the Latin* : Helen Waddell (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.).  
*Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* : Henry Adams (Constable, 12s. 6d. n.).  
*Aspects of Wilde* : Vincent O'Sullivan (Constable, 10s. n.).  
*Honorius Lawrence : A Fragment of Indian History* : Maud Diver (Murray, 16s. n.).  
*Collected Poems* : Geoffrey Winthrop Young (Methuen, 12s. 6d. n.).  
*Selections from the Poems of Dorothy Wellesley* (Macmillan, 5s. n.).  
*Duke Street* : Michael Campbell (Methuen, 7s. 6d. n.).

ALTHOUGH August is the holiday month of months, and the calendar of its days is decorated for many of us with joyous expectation, it bears one date whose sombre significance remains, for the older generation at any rate, something which no increasing count of years or happiness can ever wipe from shrinking memory. It is therefore with deliberate intent that we head our list for this anniversary month with three books about the Great War.

The first, Mr. Aubrey Wade's *The War of the Guns*, is an extremely well-written record of the author's personal experiences as an artillery signaller on the western front in 1917 and 1918, a record illustrated—often with almost unbearable poignancy and horror—by more than one hundred and twenty photographs from the collection of the Imperial War Museum. Such pictures may perhaps make the book impossible for the general reader. Those who can face—they will not soon forget—they will find this simple, direct chronicle extraordinarily impressive.

In Mr. R. H. Mottram's *Journey to the Western Front* the guns have been silenced, the wounds of war, superficially at least, are healed. For this is twenty years after, and the battlefields, reconditioned, rebuilt, relived in, are for Mr. Mottram, as for numbers of his readers, thickly peopled with ghosts. Not that he is

altogether pleased with what he has seen during this survey, and many of his drastic comments on present reconstruction have a nostalgic undercurrent of feeling for that destructive past which he evokes with such graphic and incisive clarity. 'On the whole,' however, he 'quitted the battlefields very considerably reassured. . . . It is not so easy to obliterate life as short-sighted and ill-disposed people have always hoped. Inanimate Nature makes short work of our exhausting efforts to turn her into a mortuary. . . . I do not feel that all those men died in vain. . . . I feel that humanity is immeasurably more awake than it was twenty-five years ago, and that all those deaths have made it so.'

Mr. C. R. M. F. Cruttwell's *The Rôle of British Strategy in the Great War*—lectures recently delivered for the Lees-Knowles Foundation at Trinity College—strikes of necessity a different, impersonal note. But as a record, as an analysis, and as criticism this slender volume is a most valuable and illuminating exposition of the facts and theories which led its author to the conclusion that, in the Great War, this country's 'actual share in the determination of Allied strategy on land remained surprisingly small.'

The studies of eight men 'who in their different ways have illustrated aspects of American life and thought' which comprise Mr. Arthur Bryant's *The American Ideal* were, in substance, given at the request of the Sulgrave Manor Board as the Watson Foundation Lectures in the autumn of last year. In volume form they make, like everything from his pen, felicitous and instructive reading, touched with imaginative insight, and bridging in bold outline at any rate a portion of the gap in knowledge and understanding resulting from the fact that 'Englishmen to their loss are not taught the history of the United States.' Mr. Bryant's plan has been to illustrate that history in terms of the representative personalities of statesmen and poets—Jefferson, Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt and Walter Page, Emerson and Whitman, Alan Seeger and Vachell Lindsay. Some may question the sum total of his choice. But no reader of these fluent, sympathetic pages can fail to become aware of the importance of their subject, or of the vastness of the issues, past, present, and future, with which it is involved.

What Miss Helen Waddell herself calls 'the strange timelessness' of the *Vita Patrum* permeates each single page of *The Desert Fathers*, her latest translations from the Latin, and a very welcome successor to that enchanting volume, 'Beasts and Saints.' Nor is there any comment to be made upon it except to say that what the

author set out to do she has most beautifully achieved, interpreting the rich simplicities of the ancient prose in all the gracious austerity of its gentle, mystical spirit, and, in her Introduction, revealing once again how profound has been her study, how wise and perceptive is her understanding of these desert anchorites who, as she puts it, 'stamped infinity on the imagination of the West' and whose lives have 'affected the consciousness of generations to which they are not even a name.'

*Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres*, by Mr. Henry Adams, is also richly steeped in the medieval atmosphere and tradition of its subject, an atmosphere in which the reader finds himself consorting in comradely fashion with abbots and kings and *jongleurs* in the great refectory of the monastery-church crowned by its aspirant Archangel, symbol of the Church Militant. From the stern simplicity of its Norman building he is transported to Chartres, the Gothic dream of lovers of Mary, Queen of Heaven. And moving amid these architectural glories of the past are the men and women whose lives were in some way linked with them. At the sure and sympathetic touch of the author Duke William of Normandy, Harold the Saxon, Eleanor of Guienne, Blanche of Castile, Abelard, William de Champeaux, St. Francis, St. Thomas Aquinas and many another are recreated as living, vivid personalities.

Claiming no very intimate acquaintance with Oscar Wilde and obviously as clearly aware of his shortcomings as of his virtues, Mr. Vincent O'Sullivan has well defined the scope of his *Aspects of Wilde* in its title. For this very interesting, sympathetic and observant study is confined, on its personal side at least, to impressions of Wilde's last days in Paris, a record designed to lift him 'out of the miasmas which still float round his name,' and the portrait which emerges is both firmly outlined and convincingly toned. So too is the graphic sketch of Leonard Smithers, that strange, almost fantastic figure of the publishing world of the 'nineties. Altogether an eminently readable book, interesting alike to the student of temperament and of literary history.

The story of *Honorina Lawrence*, wife of one of the two brothers whose names are immortally associated with the history of British rule in India, has been told by Mrs. Maud Diver with great skill and charm in a book that, despite its more than five hundred pages, holds our interest from first to last. Biographical in form and most appealingly interspersed with numerous extracts from Honorina Lawrence's own letters and diaries, its lovely story of enduring love

and bravery is revealed with such quietness, with such a delicate touch upon the reins of emotion and drama as only an accomplished novelist can control—a notable achievement, not only in its portrait of a great man's wife, but also in its reconstruction of 'the whole stormy period' during which these married lovers 'courageously lived and worked together' and which culminated in the Indian Mutiny.

Both the poetic and adventurous preoccupation of Mr. Geoffrey Winthrop Young with

'the chief things of the ancient mountains,  
and the precious things of the everlasting hills'

is given often fine, and always sensitive, expression in *Collected Poems*, a volume which, though it contains a number of poems on other subjects, draws its deepest inspiration from, and achieves its furthest vision in the

'land of the silvery glacier fire,  
land of the cloud and the starry choir,  
magical land of hills.'

In his Introduction to *Selections from the Poems of Dorothy Wellesley* Mr. W. B. Yeats confesses to 'a moment's jealousy' on his first reading of 'Matrix,' the longest piece in the present volume, which he describes as 'perhaps the most moving philosophic poem of our time.' However that may be for the ordinary and unqualified reader, one at least admits to having read the whole book at a sitting, the rôle of commentator forgotten in the compulsion of its sudden 'rightness' in word or rhythm, its coloured, urgent images, its warmth and coolness, its emotional movement and repose.

Mr. Michael Campbell's *Duke Street* is a sad little novel, squalid in setting and often in incident, yet not without its fugitive contacts with beauty in aspiration and character. It is indeed a book to which the hard-worked adjective realistic is obviously applicable, since its story of the marriage between the tuberculous-doomed Jock and the 'fallen' Peggy—he dominated by his devoted, drink-loving father, she fleeing from her hard-hitting, termagant mother—contains much shrewd and sympathetic observation of life in mean streets and of the courageous fatalism which is too often their occupants' only refuge.

M. E. N.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 154.

THE EDITOR of the CORNHILL offers two prizes of books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue, to the two solvers of the Literary Acrostic whose letters are opened first. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must contain the Coupon from page iii of the preliminary pages of this issue. They must reach the Editor by the 29th August.

'With moonlight beams of their own watery light;  
And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green  
As soothed the dazzled eye with —— ———.'

1. 'To tinge, on syren ——, the salt sea-spry?'
2. 'An orphan's curse would drag to hell  
A spirit from on high;  
But —— ! more horrible than that  
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!'
3. 'The moth's kiss, first!  
Kiss me as if you made ——  
You were not sure, this eve,'
4. 'for a trick of thought  
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought  
A sense of pleasant —— on such a day.'
5. '—— ! all night my lamp's burning,  
All night, like it, my wide eyes watch and burn;'

Answer to Acrostic 152, June number: 'And knows not all the *DEPTHS* of its *REGRETS*' (Lytton: 'A Night in Italy'). 1. *DoweR* (Richard Crashaw: 'Upon the Book and Picture of the Seraphical St. Teresa'). 2. *ErE* (Milton: 'Lycidas'). 3. *PassinG* (Matthew Prior: 'For My Own Monument'). 4. *ThinneR* (Tennyson: 'Blow, Bugle, Blow'). 5. *HencE* (Milton: 'Il Penseroso'). 6. *Steepest* ('Love Will Find Out The Way').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Mrs. C. N. Scriven, The Beeches, Stepney Road, Scarborough, and Miss Holmes, Heatherlea, Rothbury. These two solvers are invited to choose books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue.

THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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SEPTEMBER 1936.

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*WHERE THE WAR WAS GOOD.*

BY MAJOR C. S. JARVIS.

ON the whole Egypt had a very good war. True, her cities and much of the Nile Valley were filled with foreign soldiery, which might have been distasteful to the ardent Nationalists of the country, but they *were* British soldiers with a fair amount of cash in their pockets which they spent freely; and if they had not been there the country would have been overrun with Turks or Germans, who would have had far less money to spend, and who quite possibly would not have behaved so well. However much the Egyptians themselves may have wished to remain neutral, the fact remains that it was inevitable from the day the first shot was fired that their country sooner or later would become a centre of hostilities, as it will in every future big war so long as the Suez Canal is in existence, or until 20,000-ton air liners replace ships.

Troops began to arrive in the country very shortly after the War started, and consisted of Territorial Divisions from home and Imperial Service troops from India, to be followed in the course of time by the first contingent of the Australians, who incidentally were none too pleased at being disembarked in Egypt when they were under the impression they were bound for France. This great number of men and horses had to be fed, and as Egypt is almost entirely an agricultural country, a boom in land and its products was evident from the first. The British Army bought up at a generous price every cereal and vegetable that the Nile Valley could produce, the value of camels jumped from £8 to £40, and money flowed like water. As an Egyptian forage contractor explained to illustrate the ease with which he made his pile during the War: 'If the British Government wanted for example a glass of whisky out of a bottle, they did not draw the cork and pour it out—they knocked the bottom off it.' Whilst a camel contractor apologised for his enormous wealth and said it had been forced upon him. 'They brought me one day to Ismailieh and demanded from me thousands of camels at £35 per head, and next day another General at Suez sent for me and ordered me to buy every camel captured from the Turks at £10 per head. I bought the camels

one day at Suez and sold them the next day at Ismailieh with a £25 profit. Wallahi, I am a friend of the Ingleezi and did not wish for more than a £20 profit, but they insisted. What could I do ?'

The two big hotels in Cairo, 'Shepherd's' and the 'Continental,' were full winter and summer, a state of affairs that has never occurred before and never will again unless there is another war, whilst all the other hotels were rented at the most generous prices to be turned into hospitals and offices. There was a constant stream of officers coming down on leave from the front with pockets full of unspent pay and allowances and an enormous capacity for enjoyment; and Cairo experienced an unbroken season of four years instead of a short three months annually.

One of the chief reasons for the gaiety that was the order of the day in Cairo was that the troops responsible for the high spirits were not engaged in a nerve-shattering war with long spells in muddy trenches exposed to incessant shell-fire; they were not called upon to flounder through waist-deep mud and throw themselves against impenetrable fences of barbed wire; neither were whole battalions wiped out in the course of a few hours of an attack that was hopeless from the start. There was plenty of hard fighting in Sinai and Palestine, and there was heat to contend with and sand to march across, there were flies and vermin, and there were heavy casualties in some of the battles round Gaza and Jerusalem; but it was a decent war that the normal man with normal nerves could stand, and the men who came back from a spell in the trenches were not neurotic wrecks afraid to mix with their own kind, but in most cases high-spirited, care-free individuals with their appetites for the good things of life whetted by six months of hardship in the desert.

Racing went on as usual and every place of amusement was packed to the roof nightly with enthusiastic troops. There were not a large number of these, as the War had taken Egypt unawares at the end of the summer, whereas the travelling companies and music-hall artistes who think Egypt worth a visit do not put in an appearance in the country till the middle of December. The proprietors of the various houses of entertainment, however, rose to the occasion nobly and, having combed out the city carefully and mobilised everyone down to the C 3's, managed to put on some fare that would pass muster with audiences whose sense of criticism had been dulled by months of sandy trenches and staring out across miles of nothing at all.

The Casino de Paris was perhaps the most popular, and this was due more to the unrehearsed turns given by ardent but tactless A.P.M.'s every night than to the merits of the performers. Not to put too fine a point on it, the artistes were in fact what the word *artiste* is generally taken to mean on the Continent, and in other words belonged to the oldest profession in the world. As singers and dancers they left much to be desired, with the result that enthusiastic subalterns fresh from the Sinai desert insisted on lending a hand and putting some life into an otherwise boring entertainment by turning a *pas de seul* into a *pas de deux*, whilst others enlivened the band by borrowing the trombones and drums. This was always the signal for a hot and bothered A.P.M. to make his appearance on the stage in a well-meant but ineffectual attempt to restore order, with the result that he found himself twirled into the mazes of the dance and forming part of a *pas de trois*, while the house rocked and howled with laughter. It may be mentioned that since these bad old days the Casino de Paris has changed hands frequently and at the present time is an eminently respectable place of amusement.

No one likes an A.P.M.—in fact, he cannot be very fond of himself or he would not take on such a hopelessly unpleasant job—but if the British officer disliked the A.P.M., the Australian loathed him, and the Australian played a conspicuous part in Cairo from 1914 to 1918. The whole of the Anzac mounted contingent—the famous Australian Light Horse, together with the New Zealand Mounted Rifles—were employed on the Sinai and Palestine fronts for the duration of the War, except for a diversion in the Dardanelles, and a marvellous body of men they were.

There are many stories told about the Australians in Cairo during the War and most of them lack both a sense of humour and proportion. It was said amongst other things that they were deficient in discipline; but it must be borne in mind that Australia is not a military country, and the majority of the men had never even seen a regular regiment, so that the word discipline, as understood in the Army, conveyed nothing to them. They had left their jobs to fight Germans or Turks—Germans if available, but if not on the spot the Turks would do to go on with—and having no knowledge of warfare they naturally thought military traditional discipline rather rot, especially as in some cases the officers were the employees of the privates in the ranks. In action, if told to take a certain hill and remain there, they almost invariably went

on and took several more hills, having an excellent time with the bayonet and enjoying themselves thoroughly, and the fact that they rather upset the whole plan of the battle did not worry them in the least. They were somewhat insular, if one may call Australia an island, and what was right and proper to Australians must be all right for everybody else. For an English officer to wear a single eyeglass was a deliberate affront and insult, and could only be explained by the fact that he was a congenital idiot, if an aggressive one. Had they taken the trouble to enquire into the matter they would have found, as is a fact, that almost every wearer of an eyeglass suffers from astigmatism and is only donning the monocle to hide the fact that he ought really to be equipped with spectacles, and spectacles were not recognised in the British Army before the War.

In the same way the red tarbûsh, which is treated as a fancy-dress joke in Occidental countries but is worn exclusively by the educated classes in Egypt, completely upset the Australians. They could not possibly understand why a normal man should wear a red outrage like that on his head, and they almost thought that fun was being poked at them. With the Australians the tarbûsh was always an offence or at best an object of ridicule, and if they met a tarbûsh seller in the streets they bought up his entire stock in trade at what they considered a fair valuation and played football with them.

Australian humour, unconscious or otherwise, was intensely broad and one had to take it as one found it. It was the type of humour that was intensely amusing to the onlooker, but the butt invariably found it impossible to see the funny side, especially if he happened to be an inexperienced but very conscientious British A.P.M. charged with the maintenance of good order and military discipline.

One of the most amusing stories concerns the wearing of Jhod-pores, a garment which can best be described as the result of a *mésalliance* between a pair of riding-breeches and a pair of trousers. They are extremely comfortable in which to ride, but, owing to the peculiarity of their shape, should never be cut by anyone but a first-class Indian tailor nor worn by any man unless he possesses a most perfect 'leg for a boot.' They were introduced into Cairo by officers of the Indian Cavalry, and though not strictly military nothing was said about the matter till their example was copied by corpulent Majors of the Army Pay Corps and bow-legged R.T.O.'s

who had nothing whatsoever to do with horses beyond pushing them in or out of horse-trucks on the trains. Then the Australians took to wearing them, and these garments cut by Egyptian tailors were nothing more than deliberate outrages, with the result that the edict went forth that Jhodpores were prohibited and any officers found wearing them would have their leave cancelled and be sent back to Sinai.

One day a diligent A.P.M. walked into the 'Continental Hotel' bar and found there an Australian Captain wearing a pair of the banned Jhodpores, and a bad pair at that. He expostulated, pointed out the enormity of the crime, and threatened that if he saw the officer in them again he would report him to higher authority. The Australian asked him to have a drink, which was coldly refused, and the incident was closed till the following day, when at precisely the same hour and in the same spot the A.P.M. found the same Australian wearing the same dreadful Jhodpores. The interview on this occasion was more heated and the Australian, having had his name taken and his drink refused, smiled the smile of a man to whom Jhodpores, shorts, and riding-breeches are merely the trappings of red tape and hide-bound authority.

The next day in the middle of Opera Square—the busiest haunt in Cairo—the A.P.M. was horrified to see once again the Australian wearing the forbidden Jhodpores and they looked worse than ever in the open air.

'How dare you?' he shouted. 'How often have I warned you? Take them off at once!'

'Right,' said the Australian, solemnly unbuttoning his braces and pulling the offending garments down.

'Not here—you can't take them off here,' yelled the A.P.M.

'Can't I?' said the Australian. 'You've told me to take the dam' things off and I will,' and then ensued an unseemly struggle, the Australian pushing the garments down as far as his knees whilst a scandalised A.P.M. with strong views on propriety hauled them up again, what time gharries filled with enthralled V.A.D.'s and nursing sisters gathered round to see the fun.

There were two orders that were not popular with the free-born sons of Australia; one was that referring to the saluting of all officers, which incidentally was a very fatiguing business as every second man one met in the streets was an officer, and the other was the reservation of 'Shepherd's' and the 'Continental' hotels for officers only. This was particularly aggravating, as there were

only two hotels where one could get a decent dinner at that time, and a peculiarity of the Light Horse was that many of the wealthy sheep farmers from up-country were serving in the ranks as privates and corporals for the simple reason that they had not worried about obtaining commissions. They were the type of men who had been accustomed to come into Sydney or Brisbane every two months or so and do themselves extremely well at the best hotels that Australia provides, and it was no doubt extremely annoying for these men to be barred from the first-class hotels of Cairo during their spells of leave because they had been in too much of a hurry to get out to the front to stay behind and train as officers. On the other hand, in the interests of discipline it was of course absolutely impossible for all ranks to mix together in one hotel, and still more impossible to discriminate between privates used to first-class hotels and those who were not.

One night an Australian private who had had 'one over the eight' was discovered standing himself a drink at 'Shepherd's' bar. After a lengthy argument with the A.P.M. the Australian was apparently convinced of the enormity of his offence and, escorted by the A.P.M., walked through the door into the Rotunda on his way to the street. The Rotunda was packed with officers seated at small tables and it would be no exaggeration to say that there were upwards of three hundred assembled there and in the hall beyond. The Australian was very pleasantly drunk and in a very good temper, and for the first time in his military career realised the propriety of the order regarding the saluting of all officers. This order like that concerning 'Officers only' at 'Shepherd's' was a good one and should without doubt be obeyed to the letter. He halted in the middle of the room and turning his head to the left solemnly saluted ten times—then turning to the right he saluted fifteen times, cutting the hand away smartly after each salute. After this he took a short pace forward and started saluting again.

'Hurry up—hurry up,' said the A.P.M. tersely. 'You've got to get outside.'

'All in good time, my boy,' replied the Australian. 'My old pal, Archie Murray, 's given me strict orders to salute every officer I meet, and I'm ruddy well going to do it,' and he did. It took him ten minutes to reach the door, but his conscience must have rewarded him, as every officer in the hotel had had the correct deference paid to his rank in a smart and soldierlike manner.

Another thing that worried the Australian was the Egyptian fellah's treatment of his womenfolk. It was more than the chivalrous Australian could stand to see a fat, well-fed Egyptian mounted upon a small donkey while his wife plodded behind in the dust with a baby in her arms and a bundle on her head, so that whenever he met a family party of this description, which after all is one of the commonest sights in Egypt, the fellah was pulled off his donkey, had his head soundly clouted to teach him manners, and the lady was put on the donkey in his place. This did not do anything towards improving matters, as the Egyptian had not the faintest idea why he had had his ears boxed, the woman did not appreciate the gentle attention paid to her on which she put the worst possible construction, and immediately the coast was clear the fellah vented his spleen on either the woman or the donkey—possibly both.

To speak generally, the Australian soldier did not suffer from religious fervour or proselytising zeal, but one Christmas Eve a Cairo resident returning to his house heard a disturbance in the street and found an Australian holding an Egyptian *safragi* (servant) by the arm. The Australian had been celebrating the advent of Christmas, which had filled him with deep religious feeling, and when he was asked what the matter was replied: 'You're an Englishman and a —— Christian, so you'll get my meaning. Now this here is Mohammed and Mohammed's a very good fellow. He means no harm and does his job all right, but the trouble is he's a ruddy Mohammedan, and you can't get away from the fact that the name Jesus Christ means nothing to him.' Biff! and the unfortunate *safragi* measured his length in the dust.

Visits to the Pyramids and the Sphinx were just as popular with the troops as with the tourists and there must be upwards of half a million negatives in existence portraying various military parties mounted on the same old picturesque camels, with the same old Sphinx and Pyramids in the background, and the same old dragoman ruffians with myopic backsheesh eyes holding the headstalls. There is hardly a household, however humble, in England and Australia that does not possess one of these photographs depicting some adventurous member of the family who has done the great desert trek from 'Mena House Hotel' to the Sphinx and back again.

It is common knowledge that the beauty of the Sphinx is marred by the fact that her (or his) nose has been chipped off, and in the early B.C.'s Rameses II always stoutly maintained that the



vandalism had occurred during the occupation of the country by the Hyksos army who had used the monument as a target for their slingers. Some thousand years later Ptolemy I on seeing the disfigurement told everybody that the damage had been done by Cambyse's Persian troops who had used it as a target for their archers, and from 1801 and onwards every tourist has been told that during the French invasion Napoleon had damaged the same old nose by using it as a target for his artillery. There therefore cannot be the slightest doubt that in a few years' time it will be said that the Sphinx lost the most prominent feature of her face during the Great War because the Australians used it as a target for their rifles, and if other people do not make the accusation it will be quite all right, as the Australians themselves will own up to it.

Amongst other crimes of which the Australians are accused is the authorship of the famous expression 'seeing the Minx by spoon-light' which was inspired by the numerous trips made to the Sphinx by V.A.D.'s escorted by warriors, and it is an accepted fact that the Sphinx looks more attractive by moonlight than by daylight. This incidentally recalls a famous moonlight party given by one of those delightfully casual ladies who never study calendars on a night when there was a total eclipse of the moon.

Whilst on the topic of V.A.D.'s one must not overlook a soul-stirring order issued by the Matron-in-Chief and backed by all the stern majesty of military law, which said that in future no nursing Sisters or V.A.D.'s were to be seen in the company of officers, and it has never been discovered whether this was inspired by the thought that the Sisters and V.A.D.'s were too good for the officers or the officers too good for the nurses or whether both were bad for each other. It occurred, too, at a very awkward moment, as the troops had just returned from the Dardanelles, and the one idea in every man's mind was a first-class dinner at 'Shepherd's' with a nice-looking girl to share it and give the necessary atmosphere of home and civilisation. This was quite a sound idea also from the point of view of the nursing staff who were none too well fed at the hospitals, and a good square meal twice a week in those days when boyish figures were not absolutely essential was not to be despised.

The order was obeyed for one day only by those Sisters and V.A.D.'s who had made the strategical error of coming on active service without providing themselves with a mufti evening dress,

but on the second day there arrived in Cairo from the Dardanelles the Scottish Horse Brigade, and at the same time a Canadian Hospital was transferred from Alexandria to new quarters in Cairo. The Scottish Horse Brigade and the Canadian Sisters were old friends and the liaison between them was excellent as they had been together at Mudros, and to make things more intriguing both units wore most conspicuous uniforms—the Scottish Horse affecting a big Balmoral with dice-board band and the Canadian Sisters wearing a very smart dark-blue kit with pale-blue stockings. The joy at this reunion after months of warfare was far stronger than the terror inspired by the Matron-in-Chief's order. Also women are notoriously averse to discipline in any form, and the order had been given to the nursing staff only. The result was that every spare table at 'Shepherd's' and the 'Continental' that night was occupied by a Scottish Horseman or Lovat Scout accompanied by a charming Canadian Sister, and the famous order died at birth.

Another amusing episode concerns that famous period after the evacuation of the Dardanelles when, according to tradition, there were upwards of 200 Generals at 'Shepherd's' and the 'Continental.' This has been referred to so frequently by the best historians that one hesitates to mention the hackneyed topic again, were it not for the fact that there is one good story of this plethora of Brigadiers that has not yet been told. A small proportion of these Generals were of the type that received 'Bowlers' early in the War and some of them even gained the unique distinction of having bars to their bowlers before the War Office, in the interests of humanity, found them some office job in the United Kingdom, where their peculiarities of temperament and lack of intelligence did not seriously impair the allied cause. At the outbreak of war the War Office had combed out the County Clubs of England and, much to the relief of the other members, had secured the services of some old retired fustspots who had been acting as unofficial chuckers-out in their Clubs by telling those stories that begin with 'When I was in Poona in 'eighty-two——' For the last ten years or so they had divided their time between taking geranium cuttings and acting as committee men to the local Golf Clubs, and the people best able to judge their qualifications, their wives, had never by any chance entrusted them with any task whatsoever, as even if called upon to purchase sixpenny-worth of cream, they could not carry out the mission without making a complete mess of it. These

dear old gentlemen were charged by the War Office to look after 4,000 men, and, having given a sample of what they could do on the various fronts, had come back to await the issue of 'bowlers' in Cairo.

There is nothing the retired General is so fussy about as his bath—even in war-time he expects it to be ready to the minute and at exactly the right temperature; and many of these 200 Generals thought they had a right, by reason of their red tabs and oakleaf capbands, to a bathroom at their hotels. One morning there was considerable liveliness on the first floor at 'Shepherd's'—a purple-faced, white-moustached Brigadier, having put his towel and sponge in his bathroom, returned a moment later to find the door locked, to hear the sound of splashing water, and the first bars of 'A-huntin' we will go.' He took up a strong position on the mat outside, and when the culprit, who also possessed a purple face and a white moustache, emerged, gave him the benefit of all the things he had been thinking of during his wait.

The freshly bathed individual replied in kind and added: 'And what the devil do you mean, sir, by putting your damned towel and sponge in my bathroom?'

'Are you aware, sir,' said the other, in the crisp tones of one born to command, 'that you are speaking to a Brigadier-General?'

'And are you aware, sir,' came the reply, in still crisper tones, 'that you also are speaking to a Brigadier-General?' and, owing to the carelessness of 'Shepherd's Hotel' in not providing Army Lists in their bathrooms, the all-important question of seniority could not be decided and neither could put the other under arrest.

A good story is told about the issue of an Allied Power's decoration to our troops. The Power in question was fighting with us on the Salonika front, but when the list of lucky recipients of the Order was published it was discovered that every officer was serving actually at the front and that not a single award had been made to the staffs in Cairo and at the bases. An issue previously of the Serbian Order of the White Eagle had led one to expect the opposite, as on this occasion the Eagles had had to fly over the Headquarter guns, who were shooting so accurately that practically every one was brought down by the Staff, and only one bird flew high enough to evade these skilled marksmen and reach the front line. This departure from the recognised order of things was so marked that unofficial enquiries were made and it is said—though of course one cannot vouch for the accuracy of the statement—

that it was due to the fact that a Headquarter clerk had mixed up two of the many thousand returns with which he had to deal, and had sent to the Power in question not the list of officers recommended for decorations, but a return showing the names of those serving with their divisions who had not been inoculated against paratyphoid.

Another good story concerning foreign decorations is that of a gallant officer, who, for services rendered, was awarded by an allied nation an honour entitled the 'Second Class Order of Chastity.' This was a most unfortunate business from beginning to end, as the officer in question has never been able to explain satisfactorily to his wife why he was not entitled to the First Class.

Scotland was well represented in Egypt during the War, for, in addition to the Scottish Horse and Lovat's Scouts—who afterwards formed part of the famous 74th Infantry Division—the 52nd Lowland Scottish were in the country from the earliest days till they were hastily shipped to France to help stem the German thrust in March, 1918. It is a very dangerous thing in these post-War days to dare to suggest that any particular division was better than any other, but it is safe to state that the 52nd when they arrived in France were very welcome, to say the least of it. They were the most workmanlike lot of men ever collected together in one Division, being nearly all short, stocky 'pocket Hercules,' and they could be relied upon to drive a bayonet as far through a man as is humanly possible. They seemed to get very little leave in Cairo as one seldom saw them east of the Canal except on New Year's Eve, when a great number of them invaded the Capital and brought with them haggis which had been hastily handed over to the owners by the Field Post Office and which they ate at 'Shepherd's.' Apparently it takes an enormous quantity of whisky to wash away the taste of haggis, and the following day the leave train at Cairo Station was full of solemn Scots with awful headaches returning to another year of sand and mournfully singing:

'And the angels came and looked at it and they called it Gippoland;

They filled it with mosquitoes and they covered it with sand  
They talked about the Promised Land—thank God it is not mine  
So they put more sand round Gippoland and they called it  
Palestine.'

It has always been etiquette with the British Army to despise

utterly the country in which they are fighting. Wellington's troops in the Peninsula were blasphemously indignant at being called upon to save a country like Spain; Thomas Atkins of the Boer War could never understand why he was brought out to fight for a waste like South Africa; and when the Army of 1914 saw the Sinai desert their feelings may more easily be imagined than described. Palestine was better, but the advance into this country took place during the winter rains, and anything more desperately cold and inhospitable than the bare, rocky side of a Judean hill in a December downpour cannot be contemplated, whilst the plains on the coast were a sea of black slime every bit as clinging, though not quite so bottomless, as the famous Flanders mud. The result was that the troops classed Palestine with Sinai, and the following extract culled by the Censor from a Lancashire private's letter sums up the situation: 'They call this the Promised Land. I don't know who they promised it to, but whoever it is, I wish they'd give it to him and let us get back home.'

The end of the War took the troops by surprise, and most of them were scattered over Palestine, Syria, and Trans-Jordan when the Armistice was proclaimed, so that anything in the nature of a big festivity was impossible. Nevertheless, 'Shepherd's Hotel' was the scene of a very creditable show considering the short notice; but the real celebration took place on Christmas Day, 1918, when everybody who could be spared was granted leave to Cairo.

All the space in the dining-room of 'Shepherd's' was booked, whilst overflow parties spread out into the halls and passages, and the fact that everyone had a good dinner with excellent waiting was testimony to the staff of that day. Most of the diners were standing on the tables by the end of dinner, and the pop of champagne corks was like an intensive bombardment. The Manager was then rolled up in a long carpet and carefully placed in one corner of the room while the guests amused themselves with an enormous Christmas tree about 20 feet high that was standing in the middle of the Rotunda. The presents had long since been removed, but the deficiency was provided for by subalterns who climbed into the branches till the overladen tree fell with a crash into the midst of an enormous football scrum some two hundred strong who were playing rugger with an A.P.M.'s cap. Whilst this was taking place a terrific pillow fight was in progress on the stairs between the Yeomanry and the Anzac Brigade, and it was one of the epic battles of the War, as the troops were inspired by blasts on a hunting horn,

and munitions, in the shape of pillows, bolsters and even mattresses, were filched from the bedrooms by nursing Sisters and V.A.D.'s, who acted as ammunition carriers.

When the last of the revellers departed, some time between 3 and 4 a.m., the hotel looked as if it had been subjected to an intensive bombardment, but the Berberine staff performed miracles during the next four hours, so that breakfast was served at 8.30 the same morning in rooms that showed no signs whatsoever of the previous night's frivolity.

Immediately after Christmas demobilisation started and troops were shipped to their homes from Port Said, Alexandria, and Suez, every available transport being packed to the bulkheads; but the dispersal of something like a quarter of a million troops at a time when every other seat of war was endeavouring to evacuate armies was no easy matter. Shipping was none too plentiful, as thousands of tons had gone to the bottom during the submarine war and shipping yards had not turned out a merchant-service vessel for four years.

By the autumn of 1919 every soldier desiring demobilisation had been shipped off home, but it was not till the year 1922 that the huge ordnance dumps and camps all over the country were finally broken up and Egypt emerged from the War with her manhood practically intact, her finances flourishing, and the price of cotton, her staple product, soaring to unprecedented heights—without a doubt Egypt had a very good war.

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[*'Three Deserts,' Major Jarvis's illuminating and delightful record of his wanderings, experiences and administrations, will be published by John Murray towards the end of this month. Articles by him on 'Sport in Egypt' will appear in CORNHILL in November and December.—EDITOR.*]

## BIRDS AND SHEPHERDS IN AUTUMN.

BY OWEN HAMILTON.

It is difficult when discussing Nature to drop the subject of 'birds.' The very word seems to convey something fluid, changing. Even when perched on bough, wire or roof these ethereal beings are moving swiftly, musically in a hundred different and necessary ways, preening, flirting, drying their wings, cleaning their beaks or, best of all, lifting their little heads skywards with open beak, singing with unequalled adoration to their Maker or to their mate; or sometimes, as it seems to me—to Nothing—to the vast blue—in sheer *joie-de-vivre*!

As I scaled an as yet unexplored slope towards a shepherd I knew of, quite suddenly, upon the flatlands at the top, where Fred and Tom were ploughing for the sowing of winter-oats, a fine wave of bird-life wheeled up a little way in front: starlings, pigeons, grey white-tipped gulls, crows and peewits, all mixed up and, though each flying its own way, with its own rhythm, apparently unencumbering each other and thoroughly at home. It was a lesson, watching them, in what Nature can do in the communal line! I tried to imagine (as good a parallel as possible to this picture) a multitude of diverse human temperaments, clans or nationalities co-operating in such perfect unison and—failed. That abominable and inescapable Self would creep in and split up the company. For the great lesson Nature seems to have for humanity seems this: that it is 'red in tooth and claw' only as a means to live. That is—at all other times it co-operates harmoniously.

After a while, having completed a series of immense circles, musical movements in which took place (but with perfect unison) the quick accordion-like opening and closing of starlings, sedater flappings of crows and eccentric sudden twists and dives of peewits, the huge flock eventually separated and it was fascinating to watch the gulls, as I have often done in the middle of London, gradually forming a spiral in which they circled (lazily enough) to flop simultaneously down upon the empty field and face, one and all, the wind. There they remained some time, close-packed, and with seemingly nothing else to do but watch the landscape. Simply

of course because of the absence of dead meat near by or of worms.

Before dropping down the farther slope—I had spied my shepherd seated high up above me with his dog by a bracken-clump—I turned and luckily caught a distant, disappearing view of my birds again. Very lovely, especially the peewits and gulls, swirling with their white bellies intermittently glinting in the sunshine like pearls, strung against the softest of grey skies above the pale-brown fields—symphony in soft shades for any painter. And I suppose, in all my wanderings, it is the wild birds that have taught me most, being, as they assuredly are, the most perfect symbol on earth of Divine Mind, now rising musically like a lark at dawn; now lost in sunset; now swirling, as swallows do, with astonishing accuracy through sheep or, indeed, through themselves at haying-time, when flitting about the hay-sweeps. Certainly to watch them turning, swerving, stopping dead, quickening to avoid a collision of death, is to understand the perfect power of wings, beside which man's scientific inventions of aeroplane, motor and the like not only seem cumbrous but soulless and dead; and but feeble efforts at best to try and do with machinery what bird does with living limbs; man's just punishment no doubt for having legs so firmly rooted in earth that, to soar at all, he must be mechanised! Think, too, of birds' miracles of migration, showing man on arrival how perfectly to build a house without cost and in that house rear satisfactorily a large and strong family! Lastly and best of all, think how birds sing at all times of year, whether it be the lark in spring, nightingale and linnet in summer, robin in autumn or missel-thrush in winter.

And how bravely birds are out for song at the least opportunity may be judged by the fact that, just before I reached my shepherd, a lark, mistaking maybe the bright autumn day for a stray bit of summer, rose from its covering of swedes into the sky with a song that should have graced spring. A lovely act but poignant in its brief end. That song could not last. The bird sank soon and, at fifty feet or so from earth, literally dropped to hide; always a sign, the shepherd told me later, of rain.

I found the man busy shearing the wether-lambs. We were silent most of the time. He had his work cut out, holding firm the strong little beasts, and he was, I saw, very tired. But I did ask him if, perhaps, he might not have found clippers handier than the shears. His reply was typical: 'I prefers they zhears, sir.



'Tis quicker, mebbe, with a machine but 'ee don't do the work as well. Thee can't cut so closely.'

It was very gratifying to find how this shepherd and the one on the next farm both spoke to me of Hudson's book, *A Shepherd's Life*; and to discover that Hudson is gradually gaining the finest posthumous reward any author could want: that of being read and loved by the people he had loved and written of. Both men, moreover, mentioned to me the book on their own. A remarkable fact. Indeed this man, I thought, might himself perhaps have been the son of 'Caleb Bawcombe.' 'Me vamily,' he explained, 'for generations lived at Martin<sup>1</sup> and in me vather's time, 'only, moved into the Wylve Valley.<sup>2</sup> But vather were a small man an' me mother smaller still and—'tis 'er as I takes after.' He had dwarf-like legs and seemed all trunk, neck and head, which was huge. 'And I'm glad,' he added, 'aye, v'r she were a good woman.' The shepherd looked at me searchingly with his kind blue eyes.

Then I asked: 'Was your father's name Caleb?'

'No, sir. He be called Joseph.'

'Do you ever get the name of Caleb in Wiltshire?'

'Not so much now, sir. 'Tis an old name.'

So it all came out: his mention of old Caleb and how his sister with whom he lived (he was unmarried) had first made him read the book and how later he himself had read and re-read it till he had grown to love each page. 'Ah, sir,' he said, stooping down slowly and untying a puppy he was training along with the older dog, 'but that writer knew what 'e was a-writin' about.'

As soon as both dogs were together they romped like children. And why not? No one who has never studied shepherds and sheep-dogs can realise the discipline of those lives or the sheer humanity of those all but articulate dogs. Their joy in work; or how their pride and sense of duty therein must produce in them, as with children fresh from school, such access of high spirits, when at last free of responsibility. If I were asked to state the most perfect proof of the assertion, 'there can be no play without work,' I would point to the sheep-dog. For no other dog can play quite like him.

'And the puppy's well again, shepherd?' I asked—he said it had almost died a month back of fits.

'Yes, sir. 'Tis enough to make a man 'appy to see him 'is old

<sup>1</sup> Believed to be Winterbourne Bishop of the book.

<sup>2</sup> In the book Caleb also migrated from Martin towards Warminster.

self again. But they're tough—that breed. They takes a lot o' killin'. Out lambing 'o nights sometimes when 'tis snowing hard, I sees the old 'un sleeping curled up on the top o' the rick there. She never'll come inside along 'o me—wet or fine.'

'Do you think we'll ever be as hardy as that?'

'No, sir—not now. We may 'ave been once. Look at the old 'uns, even in our village, crippled with the rheumatics—they as works on the land—'ealthy as they be and careful o' theyselves. Even they be too zoft. No. There's no a-goin' back to Nature, unless we breeds a new race o' men and alters our way o' livin'——'

'—become simple like Hudson's shepherd. You've altered very little since the times in which he wrote.'

'Mebbe. But the times 'ave a-changed, sir. The old days were the best, and though shepherds then didn't get their present wage, they were more their own masters-like. But I be 'appy enough, sir, though I do 'ave t' walk two mile'n to vold an' back of a day from me 'ouse. For I don't mind work. And me master's old-fashioned still. 'E only rents the varm, 'e know, sir. He ain't bought it. And 'e 'as no car—drives about in a cart over 'is land. Sometimes I don't see 'im f'r mor'n a month.'

I accompanied the shepherd later back to his cottage and, while he went to fetch the pails for his 'old-fashioned master,' I waited on in the lane and watched a lad calling in the cows to milk; a pretty picture—a sort of song in brown, with the straggling chestnut-coloured cows matching the half-turned chestnut trees beyond and spires of yellowing poplars.

*Wylke Valley.*

## INHERITANCE.

BY MARGARET A. WATSON.

EVER since he was seven David had wanted it so much that it had made a background for everything that he did. When he was eight, he thought, 'Three more years,' and when he was nine, 'Only two,' and he tried to believe that two years was a shorter time to wait than three. 'Twelve months less,' he would say aloud, kicking the gate-post twelve times to make himself know that it was true, but although he believed it, he could not realise it, so that the waiting was no easier. 'They' had said: 'When you're eleven—that's time enough for a gun,' and David's mother had raised her eyebrows at David's father in the way that meant she was trying to tell him something without saying it, and then she had said it after all, rather quickly, as though that meant that David would not understand. 'Isn't that rather young?' [and louder] 'After all, darling, you've got your water pistol—a gun can wait.' Terrible moment; David had felt the pit of his stomach turn very cold; it had seemed to drop a long way from him, so that he wanted to hold it with both hands. There was nothing to be done. If 'they' said he must wait five—six—seven years he would have to do it. David's father had saved him. 'Water pistol?' he had said, and he had looked at David and smiled, a smile that said 'Don't laugh at her, she doesn't understand.' It set a secret between them; David suddenly felt warm and happy. He made a face at the dog, and pulled its ears until it cried out. It was all right—it was all right—there were only twelve months to go after all.

The night before his eleventh birthday was a rather terrible one. David almost longed for the comparative peace of anticipation. Now that peace was to be shattered in a few hours. David felt a little sick; he moved his feet up and down, and up and down against the sheet, and little shivers tightened his ribs until they ached. Sleep was impossible; his eyes had to be screwed up to keep them shut, and then he saw fiery cart-wheels darting against the dark. When they were open, the lids weighed down against his eyeballs, making them prick and smart.

He went to sleep just after the shapes of the furniture began to show through a grey veil, as though the darkness had been a wrapping of many such veils, that were now being peeled off, one by one. He was still asleep when they called him in the morning. He awoke quickly, guiltily, and his head ached. Already he had missed that perfect preliminary to a birthday, the early waking after a deep sleep, when the mind savours what is to come; it was rather like those rare delicious moments on a baking day, when the kitchen was miraculously empty, and the cakes lay warm and feathery on wicker trays. A currant here, a corner there, and the round clock watching you as you ate. This morning he had missed all that. He would have to begin his birthday in the wrong place, not by himself in warm and friendly secrecy, but at the point where other people took their part—a lovely moment when you were ready for it, but he wasn't ready. Someone said 'Many happy returns of the day,' and rattled the curtains across the window. He felt sulky and aggrieved. He began to dress, and his fingers were stubborn and stupid, they slipped and slithered on buttons. 'I'm eleven,' he thought. He said it aloud. 'I'm eleven—eleven.' He was disappointed because the words had no meaning at all. Then, just as he was lacing his shoes, he let his mind play with the gun. 'It'll be a little one—with toy shot,' he told himself—'not much better than a water pistol after all.' But he knew that if that were true he would not be able to bear it. His throat felt narrow inside, as though something were gently squeezing and stretching it. It was almost impossible to swallow. He had to make two attempts each time, and even then it was unsatisfactory.

He arrived last to breakfast, as one should on birthdays. There was a little mountain of parcels at his place; they rose in a pyramid on his plate, very white and crisp in tissue paper, and tied with blue ribbon. Two solid packets in brown paper lay at the foot of the pyramid; they were tied with string, and they looked a little self-conscious, like people who have come to a party in the wrong clothes. One was from Grandfather—the post-mark gave it away—the other was from Cook. David felt the pyramid, and the top parcels slithered down, narrowly missing a vase. There were no reproaches because it was his birthday. He liked to feel them before unwrapping them; when the paper and the ribbon were off, a little of the magic went too. This time he fingered them for a different reason. His eyes were on a long box, lying on the table in the window. Just a brown box, tied with thick string,

and with a square cardboard label attached. He knew at once that it was a proper gun—as different from his water pistol as reality was different from make-believe. He turned to look at his father. It was his father's gift, he knew without reading what was written on it, because there was no white paper, nor ribbon, just string, and the label with which it had come from the shop.

He wouldn't look at it yet. One by one he unwrapped his parcels, but he couldn't have told what they were. Cook had made him a cake, and it was brought in for him to see. He leaned over it, breathing on it so that the rich fruity smell was liberated by the warmth, and filled his nostrils.

'Darling,' said his mother, 'we've got to eat that too!' She was amused but not annoyed, because it was his birthday. He broke off a piece of the crust, and ate it, unreprieved. It tasted good, and made him think of Cook's bare arms, very large and firm, and dusted to the elbow with flour.

'You haven't opened everything, David.'

He mumbled something, and took a long drink of scalding tea. Then he began to fold the tissue paper into neat squares. He didn't want to go near the table yet. He realised that he could not hope to be alone with it, since it was his birthday, and this was his birthday present, but perhaps soon they would begin to talk, and he would no longer be the centre of their interest; then he could slip across unnoticed.

'David, you've left something out.' His mother made a movement as though she would bring him the parcel. David went across to the table, and stood with his feet very wide apart, his hands in his pockets. He wanted to read the label before he touched it; there was a right order in which to do things so that you got the full perfection of their flavour. That was why it was better to be alone. Other people hurried you so that you did something in the wrong place, and the sequence of events was upset. It was too late afterwards to go back, you could never re-sort the links in the chain.

David's father caught his eye, and smiled—a comfortable smile. It demanded nothing, but it offered a great deal. He opened his paper and began to read the news aloud. David's mother turned back to the table to listen; David sighed in relief. His eyes travelled over the string; it had huge knots, and an especially large one near the label. David bent to read the words, written in a dashing, busy handwriting. 'Master David Craig,' and then

the address. The man who had written that hadn't even known that it was his birthday; it had seemed perfectly ordinary that David Craig of Denestone should need a gun.

David slipped his hand under the parcel and lifted it. Yes, it was heavy. He saw himself walking through Potter's Wood, the gun on his shoulder, carelessly taking aim. He thought of the old rat down by the hen house, that stole the eggs; Perkins would no longer set useless traps baited with cheese; they would say: 'Ask Master David to come with his gun, Perkins.'

'Aren't you going to open it, David?'

She was disappointed, his mother. She had looked forward so much to his excitement, had planned it all so exactly, and it was going wrong. Wasn't he pleased? Didn't he want a gun? Oh, but he must; she wanted to watch him, to share in his pleasure. What an odd child he was. Not spoiled, but different; she was vaguely upset and irritated by this difference; he had no business to sulk on his birthday.

The wrappings were off, the box open, the gun lay, smooth and shining. David ran a finger over the glossy wood—it was very cold. The heat of his finger left a misty trail that dimmed the shine for a moment; he watched it fade, and then made another for the pleasure of seeing the brightness come again. You knew at once, beyond all question, that it was heavy—no need to lift it; it was so solid, its curves so exquisite, that you took it seriously at once. David's finger felt the trigger, easing against it—gently at first, then harder—he wanted to gauge the moment when resistance would give way.

'Mind it doesn't go off.' He knew, of course, the moment after he had jumped, that it wasn't loaded, but he had responded to the words before his mind had given them intelligence. His heart beat against his ribs in jerks, and a sharp pain shot up the finger that he snatched from the trigger. He was crimson. His mother laughed. 'It isn't loaded, darling.' (After all it was only the next step to a water pistol, a kind of grown-up toy, but it was a pity, since he had wanted it so much, that he didn't like it after all. He had said nothing—had not even taken it from its box.)

David's father looked over his paper.

'I'll be home early this afternoon, while it's still light. I want to give you a lesson in how to use it. We'll go to Potter's Wood.'

'Right,' said David. He stopped rocking on his feet, and stood

very firm and square ; his cheeks grew cool again, it was all right after all, the dignity of the gun seemed to envelop him also, so that he was taller and heavier and more important than the David of yesterday who had been only ten. He put the lid on the box, and went back to the table.

'Thanks awfully,' he said, '*awfully*, it's a good gun.' He helped himself to more toast. His mother watched him. '*Children are like animals*,' she thought. 'Food first, and the rest a long way behind.' David put another piece of toast into his mouth, and wondered what would happen when he had to swallow. There was no taste either, he might have been eating gravel.

'This afternoon,' said David's father. 'About three—no, I might be late—make it three-thirty—that all right ?'

'Quite,' said David. They were both very serious, it was a business engagement.

'That will be lovely, won't it, darling ?' said David's mother. David nodded vigorously. 'Great,' he managed.

('Why can't he be enthusiastic ?' she thought. 'He's talked about nothing else for four years now ; when he's got it, he doesn't want it. Children are disappointing.')

David looked at all his presents again ; this time he saw what they were. He arranged and rearranged them on a table in the corner, as he had done every year since he could remember, but he did not once look at the gun. It gave him a vivid pleasure to keep his eyes turned from it, and to know that it was there.

Much later, when everyone was busy, and the household affairs, momentarily displaced by the importance of a birthday, had swung back to normal, David lifted the gun from its box, and took it out into the garden. He raised it to his shoulder. He had done it so often in imagination that it did not feel at all strange. The weight against his collar-bone was a friendly pressure.

Half-past three came, and they went into Potter's Wood. David's father loaded the gun. When David took it from him, it felt different ; it was alive now, where it had been dead before. The little innocent-looking cartridge had given it a soul.

'Aim at that tree—steady—choose a spot, and fix your eye a little above it.'

David's finger, suddenly hot and slippery, pulled the trigger ; the gun kicked him in the shoulder, and involuntarily he closed his eyes. They were open again in a flash, and searched his father's face.

'Fine, we'll do it again—it's a ticklish job to aim straight. Keep your eye on the target—now.'

David breathed loudly through his nose. He was pleasantly aware of the sting in his shoulder where the gun had kicked him. '*Water pistol*,' he thought. There seemed to be a great gulf between yesterday when he had no gun, and to-day.

'That's better—good man, that was well aimed.'

David's happiness was suffocating.

They passed the hen house on their way home.

'Rats in there,' said David's father, 'they're stealing eggs again. Big grey whiskery fellows, too cunning for the trap. Later you might bring the gun along—we've got to get rid of them somehow. Shoot rats—weasels and stoats too, if you can get 'em, and leave the rest alone, that's my advice. Killing's not much fun.'

Killing—of course that was what guns were for.

David laid it reverently in its box, he was sated with happiness.

The lessons went on until David could hit something within a creditable short distance of his aim.

'It's practise you want now—you know what to do,' his father said, and David practised. Every moment while the light lasted he wandered about Potter's Wood. Sometimes he was an explorer in an unknown continent, sometimes he was pursued for his life by savage tribes, but he kept these things to himself, aware of their childishness. His mother was amused and very proud. 'He's such a *man*,' she thought, watching him striding home with the gun across his shoulder. He was so sure of himself, so masterful. She hated weakness, as she hated illness and defeat, and she watched for them constantly in those she loved.

Weeks slipped by and the gun was no longer a novelty, but a familiar friend. His mother waited for David to come running in with a rabbit or a hare, she had already planned her enthusiasm to match his own; but always he came with nothing, only the gun, and a slight swagger in his walk.

'He can't be a good shot,' she thought. 'Surely most boys of his age would have hit something by now.'

'David,' she said, 'what do you shoot at in Potter's Wood?'

'Oh, trees and things,' he said vaguely. It sounded a futile answer.

'It's a good thing we're not depending on you for rabbit-pie, isn't it? You were going to do such great things when you had a gun.'



That afternoon David went to the hen house. He waited a long time, but there was no sign of a rat. He aimed at a tree, and hit it just where he had intended, but his satisfaction was not complete. He felt the need for a gesture, a justification of his right to own a gun. He wandered into Potter's Wood. A sparrow lay in a dust bath on the path in front of him. It scuffed the dry powdery earth with its wings; the feathers on its fat little breast were in a ruffled disarray. It was a rakish, impudent little sparrow. David raised his gun suddenly, and fired. There was a squawk of fear and surprise, and a tiny whirlwind of feathers and dust. Three times it ran round in a circle with spread wings brushing the ground, then the wings seemed to crumple. It lay very still on its back, its tiny legs drawn up, the claws bent stiffly like yellow wire. The beak was open, perhaps to make a sound that never came, perhaps in a last attempt for air; a thin blue film of skin was drawn down, like a blind, over the bead-bright eye.

David felt sick. All in a moment something unbelievable had happened. He wanted to wipe it out, to close his eyes, and find that it wasn't true. He did actually shut them, but when he looked again it was still there, the feathers on its breast were matted and damp, and in one place there was a streak of blood.

David put out a finger and touched it. It was still warm, but already he could feel the stiffness setting in; the feathers, between him and that stiffness, were incredibly soft and small. He walked away; it was horrible. Dead things were ugly, terrible, it had been a jolly, impudent sparrow, now it was nothing, just a heap of bones and feathers in the dust, and he had made it like that. He went back, running, his eyes staring wide because he hated to see it again. He picked it up by the cold little yellow feet, and laid it in the long grass beside the path—the head fell sideways. David shivered, his feet and hands were cold. He kept saying to himself: 'I wish it hadn't happened—if only it hadn't happened.'

Somehow he got through lunch, and the afternoon lay before him. He went out, not into the wood, but over the common. It was his favourite haunt, but it offered him no comfort.

'If I'd hit it when it was flying—but it was *sitting* there.'

David's father came home. He changed his shoes, the old lolloping spaniel trying to lick his face as he tied the laces. He took his stick, he liked the sound of it flicking the long grass as he walked. 'Coming?' he said. He did not look round. The question was only part of a delightful routine. David followed.

He was intensely conscious of his gun lying in the box on the top of the cupboard. The effort to keep his eyes from it made him stiff and awkward. He knocked against a table. His mother looked up from her writing.

'Have a good time,' she said. 'Why, David, where's the gun?'

David felt as though a flame had licked the back of his neck, and was fanning across his face. His father was looking at him.

'I—I thought it was going to rain,' he said desperately, 'and it might get rusty.' *Why* couldn't he have thought of a better excuse? Its lameness sickened him. His mother frowned.

'Oh, David,' she said, 'rusty——? What is it? Have you broken it?'

'No,' said David rudely.

'There is something though—aren't you feeling well?' She got up and half-turned to the cupboard as though she would see for herself whether he had broken his gun.

'Come on,' said David's father quickly. 'We're wasting precious time. We can't take the gun to-day, because we're not going to Potter's Wood——' He paused. 'I want to call on Jenkins, they say he's laid up again with rheumatism.'

They went out. David felt his cheeks grow cool again. He stole a glance at his father. The silence between them was no longer the comfortable silence of intimacy that has no need for speech, it was awkward and heavy with the thing that was on David's mind. He wanted to speak of it, but his tongue refused him the words. He felt that if his father knew, the sparrow would not seem so dead. They visited Jenkins, and David and the spaniel waited in the lane. David's father came out, and he watched David poking the earth into mounds with the toe of his shoe.

'Which way home?' he said.

'Potter's Wood,' said David.

They walked quickly, in single file, because the path was narrow.

'You go first,' said David's father, 'then you'll get the rain from the bramble branches, and I'll come through dry.'

David laughed, a little unconvincingly.

They came to the bend in the path where the long grass grew lush and thick. David's father flicked it with his stick.

'Don't,' said David suddenly. 'Look—in there—in the grass.' He wandered on, hands in pockets, trying to whistle, but his ears

were straining to catch the sounds behind him. He heard a rustle, and a sudden thought struck him.

'Brian,' he called, 'here, Brian—good dog.' Brian pushed against his legs, squirming and doubling himself in ecstasy at this attention.

'I see,' said David's father behind him. They moved on, still in single file, until the path grew wide enough for them to walk abreast.

David's father pulled out his pipe; when it was well alight, he spoke with it between his teeth.

'It's not much fun killing things, is it?' His voice was very ordinary. He was not shocked, either by the dead sparrow, or by David's weakness. David felt as though he were being readmitted to a friendly world from which he had been shut out.

'I didn't mean to kill it,' he said gruffly. 'I was afraid it'd look silly to have a gun, and not to kill something. I couldn't find a rat. It was pretty beastly,' he added in a rush.

David's father sucked at his pipe.

'Yes,' he said, 'I imagine it was pretty beastly—poor David.'

David's mother met them in the hall. 'Hallo,' she said. 'Had a good walk? I suppose you'll be off again with the gun now.'

'No,' said David.

'I thought by now you'd have been bringing in a tremendous "bag," rabbits and birds—Cook's quite disappointed.'

David went white, he turned without a word and ran upstairs. His mother made a gesture of puzzled impatience.

'I don't understand him,' she said. 'He's tired of it so quickly. I thought he'd have such a wonderful time shooting things.' And to herself she thought, 'Is he afraid of the noise? Or is it that he can't learn to shoot? Oh, I hope he's not a coward.'

David's father stood by the window looking out. He was remembering; twenty years ago, and his first leave—waiting for the moment when he could relax, when he could touch civilisation, not only of body but of mind—ease the violation of his nature when the shame and sickness of it all were shared; and then the cab had stopped; she had come flying down the steps, with the door banging behind her.

'Oh, darling, I'm so *proud*, so *proud* of you—it's rather wonderful to be a soldier's wife.' By the end of that first evening he had known that she could not understand. 'It's such a *man's* life,' she had said. He had explained it carefully to himself, and the

explanation still held good. 'Imagination's not enough—you have to see and feel—at the same time, so that seeing and feeling are one.' For the rest of that leave he had not spoken of his thoughts, only of events. Now he thought of David, his eyes grew very kind; David understood.

'The boy's all right,' he said.

She put her hands on his shoulders, and raised her face to his.

'I only worry about him because I couldn't bear you to be disappointed in him. I want him to know what a brave strong father he has—I want him to live up to it. I want him to be ashamed of weakness and fear because of it.'

David's father kissed her, but his eyes watched the stairs, waiting for David.

'Don't worry,' he said, 'David takes after his father'—he smiled—'more than you think perhaps.'

### *TRAFALGAR SQUARE.*

WE kissed.  
It seemed the very city  
Held its breath  
And every sound was hushed.

Into a silence  
Deeper and older than death  
Came the beating of wings,  
The splashing of fountains.

So old were we then,  
Older than cities,  
Than rivers or mountains,  
Alone on the earth  
With the pigeons and fountains  
Making music and mirth  
As we kissed.

ANNA McMULLEN.

*BENDS THE ROAD OVER A HILL?*

BY ELEANOR WILLIAMS-MOORE.

## I.

YES—over many, many hills; sometimes alone with the hills and the sky, sometimes side by side with solitary farmsteads, or running through lost villages, on to towns . . . cities . . . and the world. It is a thin grey string that winds itself securely about the Appalachian Shield, whose proud hills linger to worship a precious bit of lapis lazuli—Lake Memphremagog. This great lake trails its beauty through the Eastern Townships of Canada, all but its southern extremity which has been carelessly left in an alien land.

An unknown road reminds me of my own life. I start upon it without knowing what I shall encounter upon the way, where it will lead me, nor when it will end. I am vaguely aware of a perpetual stream of human beings who have tramped it ahead of me. If I examine the way carefully I may find the imprint of footsteps, light and heavy, grave and gay. Tramp, tramp; tramp, tramp; soldiers, martyrs, priests and kings—and the millions who were none of these.

The long Canadian winter had melted away. I told myself, ‘You must go and see Spring on the Mountain.’ So I left the city behind me. But the moment I set foot upon the well-known road encircling the summit of Mount Royal on the Island of Montreal, I remembered another road; my heart yearned to explore its mysteries, and I knew would give me no peace until I had returned to it. I wanted to learn it by heart as one would a poem; my feet had only skimmed it once . . . lightly. That was upon a summer’s morning five years ago, and I had a companion; my French-Canadian hostess chatted gaily by my side. Now I truly believe that one cannot feel the pulse of a road, nor become attuned to its real personality unless one approaches it alone. Only deep down in my consciousness—unrecognised at the time—was I aware of the road; I neither saw its face nor heard its voice.

We merely made a convenience of it for about four miles; paid our call upon an old friend of mine, the wife of a gentleman farmer; admired her husband's pet hobbies—a field of gorgeous gladioli brought from far corners of the earth and three prize bulls safely incarcerated in the bull-house; drank a glass of sherry, and started upon our return journey, only to be caught in a heavy shower. We huddled beneath the thick bushes crowding about the feet of the trees alongside the road, but they afforded us no shelter, so we set forth again wet to the skin. Ahead, through a fringe of rain loomed a grey shape, the Benedictine Monastery, the only one of this Order in Canada. Madame said, 'We will ask them for shelter.'

Our approach was marked by a lay-brother at a window, and we were taken to the kitchen to dry our clothes. There a fire roared in a large stove, and the air was heavy with the delicious aroma of macaroni and cheese being baked for the monks' noon-day meal. As Madame was already acquainted with 'le Prieur,' we received a cordial welcome, and an invitation to lunch after the monks had partaken of theirs. Alas, they had left us no macaroni and cheese, but a bottle of home-made wine helped to enliven an otherwise dull meal. With no accommodation for women they had not turned us away, but had given us shelter and food, and when we were refreshed 'le Prieur' drove us home in his car.

Although that was long ago, the road still haunted me; called me urgently to return and share its secrets. Spring with her scented apple blossoms had passed, and summer had followed with ripe beauty when I accidentally learnt that the Benedictines had established a 'pension' for women. I wrote immediately for accommodation and received the following letter written in precise English:

'We will be very glad to have you as a guest for a week. Now at the house where you will live near the Monastery, there are a few ladies, but only one speaks English, and not fluently, so you will be, perhaps, a little solitary, but I understand by your letter that is what you want.'

The day I heard from them was the day they expected me to arrive. Their letter had been delayed somewhere, probably it had dawdled along my road; but by making an effort I was able to catch the midday bus from Montreal, and after a run of nearly four hours through the lovely scenery of the Eastern Townships,

I arrived at the pleasant old town of Magog. There being no one at the pharmacy to meet me as prearranged, I strolled down the main street in search of a tea-room, and discovered a former acquaintance . . . The Korneryn. On the sun-porch overlooking the sparkling blue waters of Lake Memphremagog, were small tables all aglow with bright yellow tea-sets, napery, and bowls of calendulas. Very peaceful and soothing. But the monastery car had not arrived when I returned refreshed and anxious to resume my journey, so the pharmacist said it would be better to telephone them that I was waiting, 'Because, you know, they are dumb over there.' Which is indicative of the attitude of some French-Canadians towards their clerical brothers . . . especially if they come from France.

At last I was gliding over the thirteen miles which separated the monastery from Magog. At the wheel of the car was a cheerful young lay-brother who kept up a voluble and rapid chatter in French, which required all my attention to follow, and deprived me of communion with the grey plush road, the lapis-lazuli lake and the emerald hills. The evening meal was in progress when we arrived, and I was immediately taken through a tiny 'parloir' into the women's refectory, where we were served by a lay-brother who spoke English fluently, and laughed easily. Except for the Chapel the monastery was 'cloture' to us. Around the table sat six French-Canadian women, old and young, with Madame C., who was in charge of the 'pension,' at the head. She came from Rimouski far down the St. Lawrence River, and could weave strong, gaily-coloured 'couvre-pieds.' Her son was the keeper of the bees; he hoped to be ordained in a year's time, therefore his studies received more attention than the bees, but the small quantity of honey they *did* produce was fit for the gods . . . it tasted of the perfume of roses. When Madame C. heard that I was not of her faith she looked very wise, and nodding her head and shaking her finger, said, 'I knew she was English as soon as I saw her'; English (-Canadian as distinguished from French-Canadian) to her being synonymous with non-Catholic.

And I felt an alien in that community, I neither crossed myself twice before and after meat, nor did I relish a dish of lettuce, cold butter beans and raw onions served with sour milk; or cheese for breakfast, and 'café d'orge'—coffee brewed from barley which has been roasted and ground. Although the lake teemed with fish, none were ever served, and all the eggs and poultry were sent to

market. I really might have been paying a visit to the Abbey of Fecamp on the coast of Normandy in the sixteenth century, the atmosphere was so heavy with piety and thoughts saddened by constraint, and by constantly dwelling upon the sins of this world. As I was not one of themselves they could not understand why I was there—I neither attended Mass nor compline, hence I was subjected to a stealthy surveillance. Another thing, the French-Canadian does not walk for the love of it; the women at the ‘pension’ took their exercise in huge, noisy rocking-chairs on the verandah, and could not understand me when I related that I had walked five miles in a morning, three after lunch, and more again in the evening. Ulterior motives were attributed to my solitary wanderings about the countryside, and sometimes companionship was forced upon me which I had difficulty in eluding. Their attitude towards my evening rambles was aptly expressed by a young school-teacher who feared the dark, ‘But of course I know *you* are not afraid, and will be “discrete.”’

However, they were mollified when I attended High Mass. The Chapel was a humble place built like a box with floors, walls and ceiling covered with narrow boards brightly varnished. Two statues of the Virgin and St. Benedict—their patron saint—hung upon the walls. There was a small organ played by a tall, thin monk who also had charge of the accounts for the monastery. Some thirty monks and lay-brothers raised their voices in the Mass. One of the oldest yawned widely while he chanted. Another slept through the sermon by ‘le Prieur,’ with his plump little chin resting upon his breast. It was he with whom I had several interesting talks. His birthplace was Brittany. He had lived in many parts of the world, including Tracadie, New Brunswick, a leper colony. When I asked to take his photograph he had first to obtain permission from ‘le Prieur,’ and then to shave. All the monks looked tired and sad, their day began at four o’clock when other folk were sound asleep. Flies buzzed as they courted a slow, torturing death on sticky fly-catchers swinging in the breeze near the windows. The Chapel bell rang. A cock crew. It was over.

## II.

A long field sprawling across a hillside that sloped gently down to the lake separated the monastery from the ‘pension,’ which stood abruptly against a joyful little wood, as though pushed there for safe-keeping. Up the hill at the back a field of fast-ripening



corn waved lazy greetings to each passing breeze. Below the house a field of barley was being cut. There was no need for haste, and the sun was hot, so the three lay-brothers and one horse tramped leisurely round and round. Like a shapely blue bowl the long straggling lake emerged from warmly embracing hills . . . hills that rose and fell in waves until they broke in a pale quiver of light against the horizon. Infinitesimally small in the distance a white sail moved like a swan in and out of sight. The joyful, little wood was alive with little folk; tiny wrens busied themselves about a choke-cherry bush, a humming-bird stopped a long while over his toilet, pressing his head far back and upwards so as to thrust his long beak into his breast feathers, then his tail was raised for a grooming, his wings and back preened; cat-birds called a challenge from a beech-nut tree, while a pair of robins warbled ceaselessly of family affairs. On a milkweed plant a gorgeous caterpillar was devouring his breakfast. His coat was like fine white silk gaily striped with green and black. Softly I stroked his smooth, plump body. Struck with surprise, he stopped eating and turned his glossy green head backwards. Then he buried his head coyly, rubbing his nose against the leaf as if in delight. Across the brilliant morning silence the Chapel bell tinkled a reminder of God. Amid so much beauty neither the birds, the caterpillar, nor I needed that reminder.

Lying there in the shade my thoughts were busy with my discoveries of the night before. Immediately after dinner I had set out upon my road where it passed the monastery to the left. I was soon beyond the circumscribed space where the monks took their evening exercise in groups of twos and threes. The road ran away downhill as though running away from the drab monastery to the lovely serenity of the lake. I followed it with zest, feeling that I too were escaping . . . escaping from unreality. At the end of a mile the road ended abruptly in a beach covered with rough shingle. Part of it was private and divided by a fence ending in a stile. There I found a seat and looked about. It was a charming little beach, crescent-shaped like the young moon wandering overhead. On either side well-wooded spurs jutted protectingly far out into the lake. Across the water a filmy curtain was dropping tenderly over the hills. Owl's Head—the highest and most remote—was dimmer than Elephant's Back. Above the latter a cluster of rosy clouds seemed held enthralled by the setting sun. Except for the singing wash of small waves on the crescent beach,

and an occasional murmur from a fisherman's boat far out, all was still.

Close at hand was a huge boulder bearing the following inscription :

AUSTIN  
FIRST SETTLEMENT BOLTON  
1792

which record the road proceeded to elucidate for me.

Nicholas Austin was a resident of Somersworth, New Hampshire, and because of his firm allegiance to his Royal master, he was persecuted by the government that came into power after the American Revolution. Illustrative of his faithfulness to his Sovereign during these troublous times is this incident. In some way he became acquainted with the existence and details of a plot to seize the person of Governor Wentworth, whose sympathies for the British were suspected ; so he rode all one night that he might give His Excellency warning of his danger, and return before light lest his absence should be discovered and the cause suspected by those on the side of the revolutionaries. His Excellency was not easily persuaded to fly, and it was only after Mr. Austin's departure that he made up his mind to follow him with his lady. They arrived at Mr. Austin's home at nine o'clock in the morning—precisely the time fixed upon for taking him into custody had he remained. From Somersworth they went directly and privately to the place of embarkation, and took passage for Quebec, which city they reached in safety.

For this and other similar services Mr. Austin was warmly welcomed to Canada when he arrived here to carve out a new home for his family in the wilderness. Fortunately, by address and the influence of friends he was able to save his property from confiscation, and disposed of his beautiful estate at Somersworth.

By the Constitutional Act of 1791, the Eastern Townships became a possibility. That Act exempted from seigniorial tenure any lands petitioned to be granted under English tenure . . . called 'free and common socage.' The Townships as distinguished from Seigneuries, immediately began to be settled by English-speaking people. To obtain the grant of a township a number of individuals—about forty for an area of ten square miles—intending to become settlers were first required to organise themselves into a company under the name of 'associates.' Nicholas Austin, patentee of

Bolton, and his associates received a grant of 62,671 acres. Upon becoming joint proprietor of this land Mr. Austin visited the premises, erected a log house where the boulder now stands, and made a commencement. Later when he came in with his family he was accompanied by a number of men hired for the purpose of clearing land. The Austins left their home in Somersworth when the snow was two and a half feet deep, with three yokes of oxen . . . one sled being loaded with hay and grain for the teams, the two others with the family, household goods and provisions. They had to camp out in the woods for nine nights after leaving the settlements in Vermont, before reaching their new home. For many miles not a single settler could be found, not a tree cut, the land not even surveyed, and a 'waste, howling wilderness' lay around for several days' journey, continuing so for a number of years after Mr. Austin's first coming to the west shore of the lake. No mill or place where flour could be obtained was nearer than Danville, Vermont, distant upward of forty miles. They proceeded to chop and burn the timber on ninety-five acres, at which the smoke was so thick as for a time to obscure the sun, and great fear was felt lest their house should be burnt, but, by effort, this calamity was prevented, and the land thus cleared and prepared immediately, that same season yielded one thousand bushels of corn.

The corn they raised was at first pounded in a large wooden mortar called a 'plumping mill,' an invention of the Indians. It was made of a log some fourteen inches in diameter, standing on one end, while in the other was formed a cavity after the fashion of a salt mortar. The pestle was of wood about two and a half feet in length, and some five or six inches in thickness, rounded at the bottom, the middle made of convenient size for the hand, and fastened at the top to a spring pole, so as after each stroke to rebound for another. Putting about one quart of corn into the mortar at a time, the pestle was applied, and when the grain was sufficiently pounded, the sieve was brought into use to separate the coarse and fine meal; the former being used for the dish called 'hominy' by the Indians, while the other could be mixed with stewed pumpkins and made into an excellent coarse bread, or used in various other ways known to housekeepers in this country. Later Mr. Austin procured something like a coffee mill which, when propelled by water from a small brook near his home, by being kept constantly going would grind corn at the rate of six bushels in twenty-four hours.

He came to Canada with an abundance of means, and as it had been his ambition to become a large landed proprietor, his wealth was freely used in what he considered was for the good of the country, such as the construction of roads, bridges, mills, and in extensive surveys, etc., but, whether his plans were not well matured before being put in practical operation, or whether there was a large infusion of the visionary element in his mental composition, it is apparent that from some cause his anticipations were not in any degree ever realised, and he had the grief and mortification of seeing his fortune wasting away before the untoward influences with which he was brought into contact. He was very arbitrary, and, through fault or misfortune, seemed better fitted to make enemies than friends.

He was bred a Quaker, but in consequence of having married out of that society, he was looked upon as an alien, till, by continued adhesion to the customs of the sect, he retrieved his standing and was forgiven, continuing to wear the Quaker garb and retaining their habits of speech till his death. He was unfortunate in his family relations, his wife having suffered for years from a partial derangement of her mental faculties, which was probably induced by a (to her distasteful) change from a home of luxury and refinement, to the hardships and self-denials of life in the woods, involving, as it did, the loss of all moral and intellectual culture. She had been tenderly and delicately reared and, till her removal to Canada, had been used to occupy a position in society in accordance with her tastes and capabilities.

Some of their greatest sufferings and inconveniences arose from the want of proper medical advice in the family. One of its members accidentally fell and broke an arm, when the limb was suffered to grow together in such a manner that a large bunch protruded from it a little above the wrist, healing in that way to the great annoyance of the owner.

Mr. Austin died in 1821, ruined in fortune and disappointed in hope. At his request he lies buried on the prominence he had named 'Point Gibraltar,' where he sleeps alone; the spot having been designated by a simple birch-tree which, however, was unfortunately cut down by mistake.

When I started to retrace my steps the crescent moon was moving towards a hill in the west; the dusk was lulling the world to sleep. Treading the road lightly with bare feet three French-

Canadian children came out of the shadows. Their happy 'bon soir' opened the stillness for a moment, only to leave it shut tighter about me than before. The pageant conjured up by the road had vanished; the young moon was completely hidden; twinkling lights in the monastery beckoned through the trees; while the Chapel bell defied the velvety darkness with 'Sanc-tu-ar-y! Sanc-tu-ar-y!'

### III.

But that was only one verse of the poem of my road; I knew it had more were I to seek them. It was an epic poem with rich cadences awaiting release in my receptive mind, so I sought it in the clean freshness of early morning when no moonlit shadows played across its grey breast like fair fingers playing upon a harp. Only the road and I were free; only we might go on and on. The little waves chopping at the shore of the lake with their continuous murmuring were prisoners, they rose and fell, they advanced and retreated, but they never went beyond the shore. The hills hurrying so gaily down to meet the lake were compelled to stop; a tractor ploughing a field with strident voice went up the hill but never over the top, it grew fainter and fainter until I left it behind. Two lay-brothers with tanned faces and closely shaven heads, wielding their scythes in musical rhythm against the masses of weeds on either side of the road were not free, they were chained as surely as though a ball and chain lay at their feet.

I climbed the road leading away from the monastery and the lake. Owing to the long drought my footsteps sank deep into its downy breast. Although it was only mid-August, autumn had planted her glowing standard already on the hill-top behind the 'pension.' A splash of scarlet fell at my feet; even autumn follows when the road calls. Brown and orange butterflies danced from flower to leaf, from leaf to flower. Notwithstanding that a strong breeze was blowing, Owl's Head still wore her nocturnal veil like a shy bride. The air was full of music—whirr of grasshoppers' wings, tweet of crickets, chirp of birds disturbed by my passing, and the sweet winds crooning in the tree-tops.

Across a sky of faultless blue, fluffy white clouds playfully gambolled. An undulating field of green spread a plush carpet for a single elm to tread in stately grandeur. At her feet a few sheep crowded into her shade, driven by the heat of the sun to seek shelter. The mountains seemed crushing together excitedly, like

gossipy old ladies in green gowns beginning to tarnish. I felt intoxicated by the beauty of that countryside. Aloud I said to the road, 'It is just as lovely as Bemersyde.' 'What are you talking about ?' retorted the road, 'why, there is nothing lovelier in the world than my countryside.' 'I'll tell the world about it,' I replied. 'But who will believe you ? You are not a Walter Scott.' 'Yes, yes, I know that,' I said humbly, 'but, nevertheless, I shall make the effort'

We continued along in silence for a time. A regal fir-tree stood aside to let us pass. A number of her young children waited near by. Two stunted apple-trees abandoned by a vanished orchard curved above the ditch. Ferns drooped brown and shrivelled as though scorched by a fire. Immortelles lay smothered beneath a fine grey powder. The road is unkind to its green neighbours who would encroach upon its privacy ; it tries to blind them. After passing an occasional farm-house, we drew near a pathetic huddle of buildings known as East Bolton, built on the four corners of the cross-roads. On my right stood a Nonconformist Chapel, its tower and walls in need of a new coat of white paint. Neglect was also apparent in the old cloistered shed where farmers had once sheltered their horses while attending service : it was piled high with rubbish. But, diagonally opposite, where the road began to leave the centrifugal point and slide away down the hill, the Roman Catholic Church held its small, well-groomed figure very upright, its frail spire giving the impression of being always on guard. 'Keep your chin up,' it seemed to say encouragingly to the bedraggled cottages surrounding it. But they had ceased to listen ; penury had deadened their sensibilities.

Several of the cottages were empty and awry. Blindly they groped their way down the hill, their tattered, blackened garments slipping from dying shoulders. It was a lost village, forgotten by time. There was no one about except the solitary figure of a woman sitting on the edge of her verandah, the roof of which was open here and there unto the sky. At the tiny windows were yellow curtains which smiled unheedingly upon the ruin. The woman sat stolidly watching while I read the directions on the signboard at the cross-roads. 'What did she know of the world beyond East Bolton ? Perhaps she had never seen it. Was she content with her destiny ?' I wondered.

I turned away from her fatalistic calm and went down the hill passed the groping, dying cottages. A child came out on a verandah

singing a high, thin song. Below in an orchard a number of geese waddled away out of sight; they waved to me with great white wings. Impulsively I said to the road, 'O, let us escape from here.' But the road did not mean me to escape, even though we went beyond the village to the open fields and entered a cool, quiet wood. It chattered ceaselessly of the tragedies and comedies it had seen played out. 'Your world,' it rebuked me, 'is responsible for these conditions, for bankrupt farms, empty smithy and closed shops, whose gaping windows cry aloud for bread and meat to lure the busy housewife to make her purchases for hungry mouths. Now, noisy machines use me on specified days to carry bread and meat to a retreating populace. Yes, your changing world is to blame.'

'It is all very sad,' I agreed, 'and such a pity that all who wish may not make a happy livelihood in this fertile land.'

'Sad! I should say it is sad,' the road complained bitterly, 'and the poor "Curé" is distracted trying to keep his dwindling flock together. They will disappear the way the English did. But, you must remember the "Curé," he was "le Prieur" at the monastery when you paid your first visit five years ago.'

We came out of the cool wood refreshed and quite gay. We had been playing a game . . . 'London Bridge is falling down, falling down—falling down,' the wood sang with branches clasped tenderly above my head. To my left a hillside glowed with golden-rod. It beckoned, so I left the road to flow on down the hill and up the other side, only to vanish into a blue-green mountain on its way to beautiful Bolton Pass, and the wide world. The children of Hamelin might have disappeared just there with their Pied Piper. I threw myself down on the sweet warm earth. Bees hummed in the sunlit golden-rod. From a farm-house at the foot of the hill a dog ran out barking; silly fowls scuttled away squawking; the road may have frightened them with some epithet . . . it easily may.

#### IV.

Another time I sought East Bolton towards the end of a long twilight. A soft wind blew from the east, its scented kisses caressed my cheek and hair. As I passed a deep pine wood a cool, aromatic wave enveloped me. Twilight dwindled; the sky became overcast; the stars ceased to flow. A pale moon played at peep-show with the road and me. A silo and a barn clung to the sky-line.

In and out of a tiny door that must have led to fairy-land, some ragged French-Canadian children were at play. It was they who had offered me an apple from their basket one morning as they were returning from gathering windfalls. We were friends . . . we had a common friend in the road.

Passing the cross-roads I continued straight ahead. 'Monsieur le Curé' sat on the verandah of 'le Presbytère' with his back to the road, straining his eyes to read a newspaper by the fading light. A lamp lit up his kitchen where I could plainly see his housekeeper clattering amongst her pots and pans. I went a little farther, and when I retraced my steps I thought I would call on 'le Curé.' But others were ahead of me; a habitant couple were approaching his door with clumsy, hesitant footsteps. They were the toilers of our world, unafraid of rough work. Their hands—hardened and tanned—clutched at their garments nervously. I did not stop. Between 'le Presbytère' and the Church stood a cottage with clumps of golden-glow near the front door, and hollyhocks against a wall. From within strains of a fiddle fell startlingly upon the waiting dusk. On the Sabbath the French-Canadian makes merry when his Christian duties have been performed. The fiery strains of music aroused my desire to hear more about those United Empire Loyalists, who found their chief diversion in dancing one hundred and fifty years ago. 'They loved me,' whispered the road in my ear, 'it was they who first surveyed me: laborious toil and many discouraging adventures went into my building.'

In those early days, as already observed, all that part of the country was in a state of nature, and only a path was at first 'bushed out.' That is to say, trees were marked by a man armed with a compass, axe, fire-arms, and flint, steel and spunk for lighting a fire. Sometimes the embryo road passed over swamps and morasses, through which it was impossible for a horse to struggle; one in particular being one hundred and seventy rods in breadth, in which the water and mud were from four to six feet deep. Of course these could only be crossed by the foot traveller, who picked his way through on the fallen timbers and mossy formations with which swamps abound. One story is told of a man who lost his way on the crudely marked path through a swamp. With the approach of night a heavy rain was falling, and he was forced to secure a firm footing on the trunk of a decayed tree, with his back supported by another, and stand that way all night, unable to light a fire because of the rain, and with no defence against savage



beasts such as panthers and wolves. Very often the only means of bridging a stream was by way of a tree felled on either side with the tops meeting in mid-stream . . . a very perilous venture.

The most popular way for those early settlers to enter the country was on horseback, or in sleds over the frozen lake in mid-winter. Not many enjoyed, at the beginning, such affluence as Mr. Austin's. The man of the family would enter first, erect a shanty of twelve feet square—the walls of logs and the roof of bark—with hemlock boughs for beds, and a shed of poles and bark under which was a sort of primitive fireplace to be used for cooking. Next, his attention would be turned to the cultivation of what little ground could be got ready for use, and, when the crops were in, to the erection of a dwelling of more comfortable dimensions, such as eighteen by twenty-four feet, which was divided into two rooms, the partition and doors being made of split and hewn timbers. He would then fetch his family, their household goods, perhaps a yoke of oxen, two cows, a horse, proper farming utensils, and the means of subsistence for a year. At the beginning starvation sometimes faced those pioneers and their stock before the crops could be harvested. In one case the oxen and one cow died, and the poor horse was reduced to the horrible necessity of relieving the cravings of hunger by preying—like a wild animal—on the carcasses of the dead beasts.

Needing a road to Montreal, the inhabitants volunteered contributions of time and labour, so that when the snow fell and the swamps were frozen over ox-teams could pass to the river, from whence they went on the ice. The opening of even a winter road was an era in the history of those townships. To build a road over a swamp so that it would be passable all the year round, entailed an expenditure of one dollar per rod. A natural difficulty of communication at first existed between the eastern and western sections of the Township of Bolton, so that for some time after settlements were formed in either part, it was only by a long and circuitous way that people could get from the one to the other. A hunter of the name of Frizzle, while following his 'spotted lines' (the lines of marked trees by which he was guided to his traps), made the discovery that there was a natural opening or notch through the mountain (Bolton Pass) where a road might be made to connect the settlements, already bound to each other by a community of interest. After an examination the step was decided upon and a road laid out to connect by way of Brome and West Shefford with

that already open to Yamaska. A company of four men were busied twenty-four days in cutting and clearing a road, building bridges, etc., and passing most of the nights in the woods, hunter fashion. Thus was opened the first winter road from Bolton to Montreal.

But the following winter the snow fell to such a depth that the road was blocked up, so that it was impossible to pass with cattle, and when the people wanted bread there was no other way to obtain it than for one of the settlers to take a sack of the corn they had raised, swing it on his back, and on snow-shoes carry it to the nearest mill. It was no uncommon thing for the poorer class of settlers to travel on foot twenty, thirty, or even forty miles, loaded with grain or other necessities for their destitute families. These early inhabitants were inevitably their own architects, and often their own cabinet-makers. To make a bedstead they first cut poles, two of necessary length for the sides and two for the ends ; these were stripped of their bark and the ends inserted in holes bored for the purpose in four posts of equal height : this composed the frame. Then the inner bark of young elm-trees was stripped into proper widths, to be woven together after the manner of the old-fashioned chair seat and attached to the frame, when this piece of furniture was ready for use.

Another want seriously felt was that of leather, this leading the people from motives of economy, as well as necessity, to tan the hides of such animals as died or were killed. When a moose was killed, the skin of the creature was turned into good moccasin leather, the tallow was used for candles, and the meat—which when salted is much like corned beef—helped out their supplies. Part-ridges were abundant, and the products of the maple-tree, both syrup and sugar, were a great boon to the people. Most of the clothing worn by the early settlers, male and female, was, of necessity, of home manufacture, made by the industrious hands of the female department of the family. To them the practical use of the hand-card, distaff, wheel and hand-loom, was indispensable, it being the essential part of their education and often presenting room for the exercise of a laudable emulation, as, for instance, who should spin and weave the finest and make the whitest piece of linen ; who should take the preference in flannel-making, in knitting socks or mittens, or in making bed coverings ; or who should excel in cookery or other housekeeping qualifications ; for, to the domestic sphere and the care of the sick, were their faculties and energies limited.

They had none of the present resources for religious or intellectual improvement ; even years passed before the uniform establishment of schools ; they had to teach one another in the family, those who knew the most teaching the rest. No chance for schools when they had to camp out overnight in going to visit their nearest neighbours. The more cultured settlers, wishing their children to retain their purity of speech, laboured hard to this end, which was made more difficult owing to the heterogeneous collection of peoples comprising English, Irish, Scotch, French, Dutch and Indian.

Much discomfort was caused by the 'black fly,' mosquito and the moose-fly, an insect considerably larger than the honey bee, and having a sting so acute that horses were not only restive but would rear and plunge, and sometimes become entirely unmanageable when bitten by them. The settlers made smudges either of dry touchwood, or an excrescence taken from the trunks of trees growing in damp soils, or of several pieces of cedar bark closely bound together ; either of which retains fire and emits smoke without kindling into a blaze. Wolves were not considered particularly formidable, except to sheep and small animals. The black bear ravaged the corn and wheat fields of the settler, sometimes breaking into enclosures in which domestic animals had been secured for the night, in which cases the destruction was often terrible. The fox, mink and other small creatures were also very numerous and destructive among domestic fowls.

For many years pot- and pearl-ashes were the staple articles with which to make remittances in the way of trade, and were indeed the principal products which could be spared from the country, where little comparatively was raised. Due to the famous 'embargo,' potash commanded a high price, but the obstacles in the way of getting it to a market were many and great. Two barrels commanded one hundred dollars ; it took from two to three weeks to make the journey to Montreal, and two yokes of cattle were necessary to haul the load. Great difficulties were experienced in crossing the Richelieu and St. Lawrence Rivers ; open scows were invariably used on the former, while 'bateaux' were necessary on the latter, with which oars and setting poles were used.

The settlers were not without their superstitions, as, for instance, once when a child was lost, they applied to two notorious fortunetellers, who said the child had been taken away by some dark-skinned people, apparently natives. Companies of Abenaki Indians

often visited localities around, which were their former hunting-grounds. They were generally quiet and inoffensive unless finding where liquor was to be had, when the temptation was too strong to be resisted, and they begged and pleaded for a very little. If they got that little they became clamorous for more, and if they got more it made them noisy and often quarrelsome among themselves. Occasionally painted faces would appear, greatly to the alarm of the timid, but they never offered violence. The men soberly and civilly confined themselves to hunting and fishing, while the women were busied in making baskets, moccasins and other articles, and trafficking them with the settlers, from whom they usually received provisions in return.

The need of well-administered laws was a great drawback to both the moral and social improvement of the settlers; more stringent regulations than as yet had been enforced being required by the exigencies of the times. Yet, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of a civil, social or local nature, through which from the first these townships had to struggle, a good measure of prosperity was at last realised.

Now Indians, panthers, wolves and bears no longer haunt the fields and roads, I reflected with relief; only heavy soft shapes moved gently to and fro in the fields to the tune of whispering cow-bells. Pale, sharp needles of light struck across the road now and then as when a shutter is opened and closed. Rising storm-clouds gathered threateningly. The wind had swerved to the east and was pressing against me with cool strength as though determined that I should never return. Darkly the pine wood embraced me on either side. It was an eerie moment, and I was glad of the sure road under my feet. Truly a road is a comforting thing, it will take one somewhere, on and on, like life, only surer than life. Life is so uncertain. 'This time next year?' one asks; but no one knows the answer.

Where the grey light failed to penetrate, the woods pressed alarmingly close like the dark moment before death. Then the darkness parted as the pine wood was left behind, and I could just discern 'le cimetière.' Such a tiny, lonely cemetery with unkempt mounds, and weather-blackened, nameless crosses all askew amid mourning cedars. A sombre resting-place for the founder of the monastery, Father Vanier, who started out one day in the late autumn of 1914 to meet his Bishop—two years after his establish-

ment of the Benedictine Order in Canada—and met Death instead. Father Vanier had taken a boy with him in the motor-boat, and as they sped through the water, while the sky smiled brilliantly overhead, the ice was forming unobserved by the two, and mercilessly cutting through the boat. Close to Magog there are three islets, and upon one of these Father Vanier tried to beach his boat as it rapidly filled with water. Alas, he was too late: both he and the boy were drowned.

Across the woods and fields drifted the monastery bell. All is well, I thought contentedly, when unexpectedly a few yards ahead appeared a tall, black shape. I could not tell whither it was moving, only that it moved like a pointed black pillar, seeming to waver to and fro, or my eyes played me tricks as they strained to see more clearly. I admonished myself to be brave, but my heart was thumping violently. I kept on. The figure was also moving towards the monastery. It moved very slowly. Was I at last to see a ghost . . . perhaps Father Vanier's? Soon I overtook it, and only then I discovered an aged monk with a decided limp, his cowl drawn over his head. He bowed stiffly.

I turned into the field with its winding path that led to the 'pension.' I left the road to bend over the next hill alone.

*Montreal.*

## *FLOWER SUPERSTITIONS.*<sup>1</sup>

BY G. M. BARNES.

THIS is the Age of Science, but it is perhaps not so far removed from the Age of Superstition as many people think.

In the country-side especially, many of the populace still cling to their old legends, and this is particularly true with regard to superstitions connected with flowers and trees.

There are, as most of us know, many 'unlucky' flowers, though these vary largely with the particular locality, and those who would shudder at the sight of Blackthorn in the house in one county, might be surprised at their neighbours across the border who pale at the idea of bringing in Gorse.

In different places the following flowers are considered to be of bad omen if seen under the roof: Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Gorse, Broom, Snowdrops, and winter-flowering yellow Jasmine; whilst to take Arum Lilies to any sick person is universally considered to be the last word in tactlessness.

Palm (i.e. the 'Pussy Willow') must not be brought into the house before Palm Sunday, though after that day it is quite innocuous.

Hawthorn, considered unlucky in Switzerland, is alternatively lucky in Suffolk, where you may be given a bowl of cream as a reward for bringing in a branch on May morning. It is supposed in other places to cause bad dreams if taken into a room; but it is a sovereign remedy against witches, according to Scott, and the same idea prevails in Germany. It has always been a tree particularly beloved of Fairies, who hide beneath its shelter, and dance round it in their revels.

As a protection against lightning, the Hawthorn has special powers, attributed to the legend that the Crown of Thorns was made from its twigs. Sir J. Mandeville tells us that the Jews 'made hym' (the Saviour) 'a crown of the braunch of albespyne, that is of whyte thorne . . . therefore hath the whyte thorne many virtues, for he that beareth a braunch on hym thereof no thondre ne no manner of tempest may dere him ne in the house

<sup>1</sup> 'Flower Names' appeared in the March issue.

that yt is ynne no evel ghost entre.' There is an old rhyme which says :

'Beware of the oak,  
It draws the stroke.  
Take care of the ash,  
It courts the crash.  
Creep under the thorn,  
It will save you from harm.'

In the South of England there is a 'thorn charm,' which runs :

'Our Saviour Christ was of a pure Virgin born,  
Upon His Head He wore a thorn ;  
It did not rage, it did not swell,  
And I trust in God that this shall do well.'

The famous Glastonbury Thorn, as is well known, flowers on Christmas Eve, but it keeps to the old Calendar, and puts forth its flowers now, according to local tradition, on the fifth of January.

An Elder tree should always be planted near the front door of a house, to keep away witches. The same virtue exists in the Rowan, for 'witches have no power where there is Rowan tree wood,' says an old proverb, and

'Rowan tree and red thread  
Haud the witches a' in dread,'

whilst

'Vervain, trefoil, Johnswort, dill,  
Hinder witches of their will.'

In Hereford, crosses made of combined twigs of Withy and Birch were placed over doors, cattlesheds, and seed-beds, on May Day, to guard against evil spirits, and the evil eye.

The St. John's Wort is a plant of many virtues. Not only does it give protection against evil spirits, storms, and thunder, if gathered on St. John's Day (June 24)—according to popular belief in France, Germany, and North Wales—but in Scotland it is worn as a guard against all malignant influences. In fact, in days of chivalry, knights were not allowed to wear it on their persons, presumably from a sense of fair play. To wear a piece of the plant in the shoes prevents all feeling of weariness in travellers.

The Mugwort, also, is a protection against storms and Satan, if gathered and hung up on St. John's Eve : and the Houseleek

is a charm against lightning, this perhaps accounting for the idea in some places that it is unlucky to remove it from the roofs of houses where it grows.

To pick the flower of the Wild Strawberry in olden times was a direct invitation to have one's house struck by lightning, whilst to gather any Birdseye (the blue Speedwell) involved the terrible risk of having one's eyes plucked out by angry birds.

The patient person who watched a Fern growing at midnight, keeping complete silence meanwhile, might possibly be rewarded by the gift of a purse of Fairy Gold.

Fern seed has always had magic properties. Shakespeare knew this :

' We have the receipt of Fern Seed, we walk invisible,'

says Gadshill, in *King Henry IV.* This rare seed was only to be gathered by those fortunate enough to find the small blue flower sometimes produced by a fern on St. John's Eve, at midnight. The spores fell quickly, and had to be gathered in a white napkin. Besides the gift of invisibility, it was said to ensure the fulfilment of the finder's wishes and to enable him to see the fairies. The latter power was also conferred on those who found a set of Fox-glove bells which exactly fitted all their fingers.

The Rose, as Queen of Flowers, naturally has its magic influences, and in Germany is thought to drive away evil spirits, and protect the wearer from the evil eye. In England if a young girl slept with a Rose under her pillow on St. John's Eve, she would dream of her future husband.

That sweetest of flowers, the innocent Lily of the Valley, is yet unlucky if given by a man to a maid ; whilst White Heather, on the contrary, brings bad luck unless presented by a member of the opposite sex, though it is invariably lucky to find a growing plant.

The four-leaved Clover, or Shamrock, has become a recognised symbol of good luck. Pliny tells us that serpents will not touch Shamrock, a fact doubtless known to St. Patrick.

The Snapdragon, like so many other flowers, gave protection against bewitching, and also ensured the popularity of the wearer. Rosemary was worn by lovers to assist their suit, and to test the constancy of the loved one they would gather myrtle leaves : if they crackled in the hand, faithfulness was assured. To eat the leaves of Myrtle gave the power of detecting witches.

The darling Mignonette, for all its modesty, will only flourish



at its best in gardens belonging to houses where the woman is 'master.'

'Sleep with Meadowsweet in your room, and you never wake up,' is a well-known West Country saying.

A mixture of red and white flowers must never be worn at a wedding, nor taken as a gift to invalids, nor must the latter be given a bouquet composed entirely of white flowers.

In Sussex, children were cured of whooping-cough by passing them through a ring made by bending over a spray of Dog-roses growing in the hedge.

Fickleness of character may be gauged by the wearing of flowers : if they wither quickly, it is a bad sign.

'The Harebell, with her stainless azure hue,  
Claimes to be worn of none but those are true,'

and one can easily imagine the difficulty of keeping this fragile flower fresh as a buttonhole. The ability to keep flowers fadeless for some time when worn indicates a constant nature.

These are but a few of the popular superstitions about flowers. Many people, no doubt, have special blossoms which, like certain jewels, they consider 'lucky' or 'unlucky' to themselves personally. Many people also regard certain trees as having some magnetic influence.

Thus Science may develop, and Learning grow, but the Voice of Superstition speaks on for ever.

*GLORY AND LOVELINESS HAVE PASSED AWAY.*

SING from the garden, Pan. We shall not hear.  
 Warm is the fire, windows close curtained now.  
 We shall not come to dance on the cool grass  
 Or dip our heels on the dew printed lawn.  
 Alone the nymphs through the dark bushes come  
 Like white moon shafts, plaiting their silver hair,  
 And the wild fauns must leap alone, alone,  
 Where the stripped trees splinter against the sky.  
 We shall not hear. Now has young Artemis  
 Left her white chariot, the empty moon,  
 Unyoked her pearl-shod mares, and fled away.  
 Only the vacant chariot splits the skies  
 With its now lonely light, and over day  
 The bright sun's car no longer goes, his wheels  
 Cutting their shiny ruts in the white clouds.  
 Nor does Apollo shake his yellow hair  
 Above the eastern seas, but stables up  
 His burning stallions, and breaks his bow.  
 For now the sun is but an empty sphere  
 That burns alone in space, and from the skies  
 All the once singing stars are still, whilst woods,  
 Before green with nymph's footsteps, now are dead,  
 And we forget. Thou hadst thy worship once  
 When men were young, and saw swift Iris fling  
 Her rainbow on paved skies, and Hebe spill  
 Her dripping nectar, as it turned to stars.  
 Then did they lead the he-goats, amber-eyed,  
 And white fleeced lambs to slay for thee alone  
 Beside the fold. And thou didst walk, O Pan,  
 Piping upon thy thyme-grey hills, and watched  
 The grazing flocks that browsed by little streams.  
 And men heard thy sweet playing in the wood,  
 Pouring old wine upon the altar stone,

And laid out honey for thy lovèd nymphs.  
Sing from the garden, Pan. We shall not hear,  
Warm is the fire, and we have grown too old,  
Too old to see the Gods go singing by.

MARGARET STANLEY-WRENCH.

### MIDNIGHT ON THE LAKE.

THE stars are falling. On the sleeping lake,  
Serene as shadowed glass,  
They lie, rare jewels thinly strewn,  
Glittering fragments roughly hewn  
From other worlds when all the world was young.  
As if the four winds heaven's orchard shake,  
And in their wake  
Scatter moon-petals over smooth dark grass.

The stars are drowning. Down, deep down they go,  
Where day's light never falls,  
Sunk by a sudden, ruffling breeze,  
Mourned by the sighing forest trees ;  
And up, and down again, as though a child,  
Playing unearthly games in halls below,  
Should lightly throw  
Them to-and-fro—his splendid, shining balls.

Hark ! The wind rises . . . all the stars are dead.  
Waves knell their elegy.  
Suddenly, through the threat'ning night,  
A fiery flash of blinding light ;  
Another falling star. (Were any left  
To fall ?) And still they shimmer overhead !  
But they are dead.  
We saw them drown.  
Only their pale ghosts flicker in the sky.

GRACE JACKSON.

*Vernon, British Columbia.*

*THE RIVER OF SILVER.**A TRUE STORY.*

BY ROBERT M. MACDONALD.

THE people of Chillago were greatly excited one morning as we, Sam King and I, rode out of that little Queensland township on a prospecting trip. It appeared that a very rich find of silver ore had been made somewhere in the district, but no man knew where, nor were any particulars available except the testimony of a railway worker who had said that he had shaken a handful of ore dust from a bundle of empty ore bags which had been returned to Chillago. He, being a prospector when he had funds, suspected the ore to be very rich in silver, had it assayed and was amazed to get a return that showed the ore to contain over 10,000 ounces of silver to the ton. Most people believed the story, although some pointed out that no silver ore ever known could possibly carry so much metallic silver. Neither Sam nor I believed it, however, and, dismissing the fantastic story from our minds, we made our way into the country lying to the north of Chillago hoping to strike some outcropping reefs of copper or something else which might be easily worked at a profit.

But after a week had passed, during which we knapped and sampled many promising surface formations which could not be payable so far away from railhead, we decided to return to the township and from there set out in another direction. Thus it came about that one evening while only about ten miles distant from Chillago on our return journey we struck a river which, being in flood with water from the far-away coastal ranges, could not be crossed. We knew that the river should probably be fordable next day, but we were hungry, having used up all our stores in the expectation of reaching Chillago that night. We could not alter circumstances, however, so we prepared to camp, tightened our belts and laughed. We had been hungry many times before !

It was not yet sunset, and as we were unsaddling our horses the sound of men's laughter was borne to our ears. We were surprised, for we had not thought any camp was in the vicinity, but we concluded that we might not have to go hungry after all. Pleased with this prospect, we set out on foot towards the unseen

camp, and after going a little way along the river bank we saw some men bathing in a pool ahead and heard the sound of hammer-blows. Of course, we had taken it for granted that we were about to fraternise with fellow prospectors, but as we struggled through the dense scrub in the camp's direction we saw a man carrying a sack upon his shoulder approach the river bank and empty the sack into the water; 'What is that man doing?' I muttered, somewhat surprised.

'Oh, likely the others have been cutting timber for some purpose and that fellow has collected all the chips and sawdust and dumped the lot into the water so that a bush fire wouldn't have any excuse for starting,' Sam answered, and we continued to make our way towards the camp.

But progress along the side of the river was not easy, and the sun went down and the intense darkness of tropical night came on while we were still forcing a passage through the clinging growths of the bush by the river. Doubtless the men of the camp now heard us, but to make sure that they knew of our approach we hailed the camp with shouts. An answering shout greeted us and presently a lantern flashed through the scrub immediately ahead of us and the man who carried it cried: 'This way, mistels. I vely glad to see you.'

'Chinkies!' Sam exclaimed. 'We've struck a Chink camp.'

'We'll get something to eat anyhow,' I responded. 'Chinamen are decent fellows as a rule.'

'Sometimes!' my companion said. 'But not the North Queensland mining gangs.'

The lantern-bearer was now beside us and I saw that he was wearing only shirt and belted trousers as worn by ourselves, and knew from that fact that he was sophisticated.

'We are prospectors,' I began, 'and we have run short of stores—'

'Plenty hele, mistel. My name is Ah Sin an' I vely glad you come. P'laps you fellows buly me?'

'Buly!' I repeated. 'Try to sound your words in decent English, old man, until we get the hang of what you are saying. I don't suppose you meant "bury"?''

'Alleesamee, Ah Sin mean what you say,' the Chinaman smiled. 'If you plomise to buly me all li' I no' wanty live to see sunlise.'

'Rot!' Sam broke in. 'But if you find us something to eat first we'll bury you all right afterwards.'

The Chinaman seemed pleased with Sam's words and led the way to a small tent hidden in the scrub; he shone his lantern inside and signed for us to enter with him. We did so, thinking we were to meet some of our friend's mates who had not yet a knowledge of English and so could not speak to us. We were partly right. They could not speak to us! With an overwhelming shock which for the time paralysed me I realised that they were dead. There were two men in that tent. They were stretched out in two roughly constructed sandalwood coffins which lay on the sandy floor, and blue spots the size of a penny shone through their yellow skins wherever the death garments did not cover them.

'They die vely quicky an' Ah Sin puty 'em in coffins himself,' said Ah Sin. 'He die himself vely soon now, an' he pass away happy knowin' that white men puty him in coffin. You will findy it in oder tent——'

'They've died of Bubonic plague!' gasped Sam. 'Those blue spots are sure signs and they send out infection like rays from radium. We've got it too now.'

With a bound he was outside the tent, hauling me with him, and we stood in the night air, perspiring all over.

'Wha' fo' white fellows lun away flom pool dead Chinamen?' asked Ah Sin, coming out of the tent after us.

I had the impression that the man's tones were slightly sneering in nature so I did not answer him. I knew that no man could hope to escape being infected with the deadly plague if he had been anywhere near its victims, and already I felt the sensation of 'pins and needles' in my feet. I had been proud of my health and strength so far and I mentally protested against having to give up life without even a fighting chance. There was so much I had left undone too—I suppose I went on musing for a second or two, entirely unconscious of my surroundings, but I came back to my normal senses with a jerk as Sam's voice broke in on my ears. 'You darned Chinkie!' he was saying, 'I believe you knew what you were doing when you took us in to see those dead men. You knew we couldn't help being infected——'

'P'laps I did,' interrupted Ah Sin, and his tones were certainly insolent; 'I meant you white fellows to catchy plague. You have got him now, so why you no' go away an' die somewhele else?——'

'No, you yellow-skinned reptile!' roared Sam. 'We'll first have the pleasure of seeing you peg out——'

Probably Sam would have said more, but at that moment a

pair of hands reached out from the darkness behind him and closed round his throat. I uttered a cry and instinctively sprang forward to tackle the owner of the hands, but as I did so a slithery something seemed to press heavily on my shoulders and to twist round my body everywhere. I never knew how it happened, but next moment I was lying upon the ground with my strange assailant on top of me. I struggled and strained against the thing which had enveloped me and managed to roll over, and in the light of Ah Sin's lantern, which was now resting on the sand beside me, I saw that it was a human being—and realised that it was one of the dead men! I struck at the yellowish face with all the strength I could command in my position and the dead man scratched and bit at me, anywhere and everywhere. Meanwhile we rolled over and over, each being on top alternately.

'Keepy still, you fool,' sounded Ah Sin's voice, during a temporary lull in the struggle. 'How I can do sticky knife into white fellow if I no' know him ffrom you.'

My opponent, the dead man, grunted some reply and tried to hold me in a fixed position, and I did not resist. But when my eye caught the flash of the knife-blade, as Ah Sin bent over us and thrust downwards with it, I wriggled and heaved in a way amazing even to myself, and that unexpected effort drew a cry of fear from the man who was wielding the knife, for despite his endeavour to arrest his blow it must have come down on the 'dead man.' It did not come down upon me at any rate and, after waiting expectantly to feel the blade sink into my flesh with Ah Sin's next stroke, I moved, found I was not held, and struggled to my feet. Both Ah Sin and the 'dead man' had run off into the darkness. Next moment the lantern was picked up from the ground and flashed into my face. 'Great Queensland!' cried the man who held it, joyously, 'I thought that I had now *no* mate.'

'What about you, Sam?' I broke in, wiping the perspiration from my face with my shirt-sleeve. 'Some man's hands were round your throat when I last saw you.'

'Oh, those hands were not there long; I threw the fellow they belonged to over my shoulder and he then ran off like a kangaroo into the bush. I chased him for a bit but lost him. I expect that Ah Sin and the other dead man have now joined him and are getting as far away from this place as they can.'

'What was the idea?' I asked.

‘They wanted to frighten us away from this place, of course. They only pretended to be stricken with the plague.’

I said that even ignorant Chinkies in Australia did not do anything without some reason, and reminded Sam that they had tried to kill us when they had thought we would not go away.

‘I know that Australia is a white man’s country,’ my companion agreed, ‘but the Chows who get into it, somehow, don’t reason as we do. They can’t hold ground here, according to law, and Ah Sin’s gang didn’t want us to know what they were doing. I expect they reasoned that as we had not been frightened away we were better dead.’

While Sam and I were still discussing matters and eating some biscuits and cooked rice we found in the dead men’s vacated tent by the help of matchlight, the moon rose up behind the distant Bellenden Kerr Ranges and the bush around us was bathed in a mellow light which enabled us to see. We walked out of the tent and surveyed our environment, and my eyes were at once attracted to the river beside us. It scintillated and shone iridescently in places and seemed to me to be an actual river of silver. I had seen moonlight effects on water before, but I knew I was looking at no moonlight effect. Sam was also looking at the river and I could see he was as mystified as I was. After a moment, however, he laughed and pointed to an oil drum which was tied to the branch of a tree which reached out over the water. That oil drum appeared to be leaking, for a drop of oil was continually falling from it into the pool. Sam was hilariously amused at the explanation of our river of silver—every schoolboy knows that a minute quantity of oil when dropped upon water will form a skin on its surface and impart to it a rainbow-like appearance—and he chaffed me with being taken in so easily.

But I was not satisfied, and, running down to the river’s edge where the long trunk of a fallen tree stretched out into the water, I dipped my hand into the scintillating mass of scum which had collected on the tree-barrier. The handful of material I lifted was heavy and clearly was metallic in origin. I bawled out my information to Sam.

‘You’re being affected by the moon as well as the river, mate,’ Sam chuckled. ‘You can’t have got anything heavy from *that* scum; it would sink to the bottom.’

‘Maybe it would,’ I responded, as my eyes fell on a poor-looking



reef of galena (silver-lead) near the bank which, judging from the hammers, broken stones and other gear around, the dead Chinamen had been working, 'but I think we've discovered a Chinese method of keeping it on top.'

Sam came down to the water to see what I had seen and then we walked over and had a look at the outcropping reef of poor galena ore. It certainly was very poor in its silver contents and we wondered why the Chinamen had troubled to work it, seeing that many richer reefs could be found almost everywhere. Sam was still puzzling himself over the matter when I reminded him that we had seen a bag of something—most likely the broken ore from the reef we were looking at—being dropped into the river that afternoon.

'But it would sink,' he said. 'And for that part we also saw men—the Chinks, I think—bathing.'

'Yes,' I agreed, tentatively, wondering how I could best explain to Sam the idea which had now filled my mind, 'but the men we saw in the water were not in it for bathing purposes; they were shaking up the crushed ore again so that it could come in contact with that oil on the surface. The oil forms a bubble round each mineral particle and holds it up on the surface in a sort of scum. That scum naturally drifts down to that tree barrier and is collected there. It really is the *concentrated* silver from the poor ore in this reef, and is dried and afterwards bagged by the Chinamen. They wished to keep their method of extraction a secret, and that is why they tried to kill us. Likely they'll now go elsewhere and begin the same game all over again—'

'I follow,' cried Sam, excitedly. 'It is more than probable that a good many tons of the poor ore of this reef go to make up a bag of the rich silver stuff that railway man shook from an empty bag. I'll bet we've discovered the source of that silver. The people of Chillago will be more excited than ever. . . .'

And so it proved. The prospectors around Chillago now search for any ore formation—however poor—which is near a river or creek. They crush what they break from it as best they can and throw the result of their work into the water. A dripping oil-containing tank and a barrier of some kind do the rest, and it therefore happens that a high-grade concentrate is got from a reef which perhaps is big, but hitherto has been considered too poor to pay working expenses.

# RECOLLECTIONS OF OCTAVIA HILL.

BY AMICE LEE.

TO-DAY the name of Octavia Hill is frequently referred to in the discussion of the vital question of Housing. In Reports we read of 'work begun by Miss Octavia Hill'—of 'workers trained in her methods,' and these are descriptions of social work all over the world. Not only here, but in America, Germany, Holland and Denmark, her name is permanently associated with better housing of the nation. Though often quoted, Octavia Hill's personality is little known. She shunned publicity, and the record of her life (apart from her annual Letters to Fellow Workers) exists mainly in letters to her family and to the friends of her generation now mostly passed away. Those who, like myself, knew her in our youth, have a memory of her personality of which every detail is ineffaceable.

For three generations, my mother's family had known Octavia Hill. To my grandfather's house she brought her first party of poor children; my aunt was her lifelong friend and correspondent and, in our turn, my sister and I helped her.

Some account of the impression she made on three generations, each varying greatly in circumstances and outlook, may interest those who honour her name. I knew her well; her sister was my godmother, and with my own remembrance are interwoven stories which I had heard from childhood.

Since Octavia Hill's death in 1912, the world has outwardly altered almost beyond recognition and developed in undreamt of directions. Some of her contemporaries have died deploring these changes with scarcely less exaggeration than that of social workers of to-day who call Octavia Hill's methods 'obsolete' or 'reactionary.' Octavia Hill belonged to her time; she was influenced by its typical teachers, Carlyle, Ruskin and F. D. Maurice, but her methods were her own. For her, committees and Commissions never replaced individual effort, and her individualism was as passionately felt for others as for herself. Among her tenants each family was of vital importance, their rights, duties, joys, sorrows sacred. So were their homes, whether for a family of children, an old couple or a lonely spinster. They were her friends,

and the friends of Octavia Hill counted for much. She enjoyed the smaller as well as the larger aspects of a problem. No detail was too slight for her attention ; whitewashing a cottage or Mrs. So-and-So's leaking tap were remembered equally with large questions of finance, and her eyes glowed telling of some poor tenant's struggles as when she announced the purchase of an open space for the nation.

With Octavia one always associated her elder sister, Miranda. Unalike, each seemed the other's complement. One day as Octavia came in from her work, Miranda ran to meet her ; the sisters kissed, and a friend glancing from Octavia to Miranda whispered : ' Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.' Both sisters were short and broad-built, with massive heads and ropes of plaited hair (it was said the Hills could sit on their hair), but Miranda's blue eyes beamed softly, whereas Octavia's splendid brown eyes could flash fire. Miranda's mouth was sensitive to ripple into laughter ; Octavia was solemn and her lips could curl in scorn as well as smile benevolently. Curbed by a strong will, deep power of emotion showed in her face. ' Look, how she holds the whole room there ! ' said the custodian at the National Portrait Gallery, pointing to Sargent's picture. It is Octavia Hill to the life ; bolt upright in fichu and big sleeves, the little stout hands clasped tight in front. There is all the force and intellect and a hawklike glance she had at times, but scarcely the genial, happy side of her character.

Friendship was a cult with her generation. The Pre-Raphaelites were swearing brotherhood and Tennyson mourning Hallam when Octavia was young. After her family, she prized her friends ; wrote them volumes ; treasured their letters and assembled them on her birthday. Ruskin was the prophet and master who taught her drawing and helped in her first housing schemes. The Rev. F. D. Maurice, too, had a profound influence on her youth. She came on him at a time of unsettlement and doubt. She and Miranda walked into St. Peter's, Vere Street, when Maurice was preaching ; they stayed to talk in the vestry and boldly stated their doubts. It was the beginning of a great friendship, and under his influence they joined the Church of England.

Some of Octavia's most intimate letters were to Mary Harris, a Quaker lady, older than she, who lived in Cumberland and with whom she often stayed. Miss Harris, who read much and thought more, had a mind of rare quality. Octavia's other ' Mary ' was my aunt, Mary Harrison. She was the eldest of twelve, gifted, and

handsome, but a fall in infancy had made her lame for life. The rôle of resigned invalid did not appeal to her ; with characteristic energy, she threw herself into the education of her younger sisters. Aunt Mary, moreover, had a flair for interesting people ; she spotted Octavia when the latter was seventeen.

The first acquaintance with the Hills was through my grandmother's sister, Mary Howitt, who had known Octavia since she was a little child when they all lived on Finchley Common. Mary Howitt's sympathetic eye was attracted to Mrs. Hill and her four small girls in their tiny cottage. Octavia was about the same age as her Meggie and Charlton ; the children played together, and when the Howitts moved to Clapton she often stayed with them. She always led the others, and when they declared that there were ghosts and bogbarts in the old house, Octavia made the whole party in procession explore the dark cellars every night. With the Howitts lived the grandmother, Mrs. Botham, an old lady dressed in grey, with kerchief and Quaker cap, always knitting quietly in the window, where Octavia often played. One day she broke a cup, and instantly told Mrs. Botham, who pulled out her purse, saying kindly : 'Thou art a good child to tell the truth : here is a sixpence for thee.' Octavia said, when she told us this : 'I felt my palm burn with that sixpence—to be given *money* because I spoke the truth !' Her memories were afterwards tinged with sadness and the mystery of her first experience of death. Mrs. Botham died suddenly. The child had bid her good night, knitting as usual. Next morning a doctor was in the house and strangers with a coffin ; her hostess was weeping and, upstairs, silence and an empty room.

The friendship with the Howitts lasted for life, though the subsequent fate of the three playmates was widely different. Twenty years later, when Charlton on a journey of exploration in New Zealand was drowned on an uncharted lake, Octavia shared their sorrow. From earliest days Charlton loved outdoor life ; he and his father were ardent gardeners, and Octavia once laughingly said : 'I think Mr. Howitt and Charlton are more interested in peasticks than men !'

The facts of Octavia Hill's life and parentage are known from the biography by her brother-in-law, Mr. C. Edmund Maurice. She was born at Wisbeach, on December 3, 1838, the eighth daughter of James Hill. By his third marriage, which was with Caroline Southwood Smith, he had five daughters, of whom Octavia was the

third. Mr. Hill promoted reforms in his town, and it was said he rode fifty miles to petition against the hanging of the last man condemned for horse stealing. The 1840's brought bad times; James Hill's corn business and bank failed and by the time Octavia was six, he had entirely broken down and was unable to support his family. His wife's father, Dr. Southwood Smith, adopted one girl and Mrs. Hill lived with the remaining four at Finchley. Every day she went to London by the horse 'bus, to work in the office of the Ladies' Guild, where gentlewomen were taught a process of glass painting and sold their work. Not till evening did she get back to the cottage, where the children waited for her to make supper. Often alone all day, they had a loaf set on the table which Miranda, the eldest, had to cut and distribute at one o'clock.

Mrs. Hill taught them, and then the two elder girls set to work to teach themselves. Octavia, so that she might be able to teach, learned Latin, arithmetic and history. She had a retentive memory and power of rapid assimilation. A business man who, in later years, gave her lessons in advanced book-keeping, was amazed at the ease with which she mastered it. Miranda began to teach at thirteen; when she was sixteen, Octavia, bent on straightening out the family affairs, was teaching and working in her mother's office, and also managing the Toy-Makers' Guild, which employed poor children. This last brought her into direct contact with dwellers in the slums. It was among these children that she first realised the misery of the dwellings of the London poor; it weighed heavy on her heart and for a time she lost all youthful gaiety. Miranda saw the humorous side of life but there were years when Octavia rarely laughed. 'I had no sense of humour then,' she said, and told my aunt her first impression of their family (a cheerful crowd of brothers and sisters): 'One of the Harrisons says something so silly and then they all laugh and laugh!' The introduction to the family was in the summer of 1855 when Octavia, aged seventeen, brought a large party of the Toy-makers to my grandfather's house in Essex. She often recalled this day and my mother (a schoolgirl at the time) and her sisters never forgot their first impression of Octavia. Moreover, it was the first of the parties which embodied her belief that possessions should be shared. Marshals, where she afterwards often stayed, was a fine old house with lawns and great trees. It has all vanished, the site now marked by the name of a street, but eighty years ago the surrounding meadows stretched to Epping Forest. There was a north-country tradition of comfort and

hospitality, and the dining-room, with its red damask curtains and polished table, was set forth with bountiful fare. Daniel Harrison was a Yorkshire Dalesman by descent, six foot and ruddy complexioned, looking his best on horseback. He was a Quaker, with liberal views, especially as to the education of his daughters. He warmly welcomed the party, as did my grandmother—eager and gentle, she showed them the garden which was her pride. The five young daughters were at home; one with her American husband who has recorded the impression made by Octavia Hill. She walked in, a little figure in a long skirt, seeming much older than her seventeen years, and followed by a troop of poor and many of them ragged children. They came from back streets and crowded hovels. One child, in whom Octavia was specially interested, was ‘Robin,’ rescued from a cellar where she sold coal—to whom, when she was homeless one night, Octavia gave her own bed and slept on the floor. After lunch there were games, and the youngest daughter, Lucy, rowed parties up and down the lake: a magic day for children who never had a square meal and many of whom had never before seen a tree. Octavia described afterwards their inarticulate delight. When she wrote to thank their hosts they did not know what message to send; wondered if it would be ‘rude’ to send love. One child, recalling the boating, murmured ‘I did like it when the lady took us on the *sink*!’

Aunt Mary’s friendship dated from this visit. Henceforth she called her ‘Ockey’ as her sisters did. She told Aunt Mary of her childhood. Once how, as a little child, she was sent with an important message to her father. It was to a lonely cottage, and she said how she knocked in the stillness, saying as loud as she could: ‘Your little daughter Octavia has come.’ Another time, when she was sixteen, late one night she entered an empty house where the Toy-makers had their office and the wages were kept. On the stairs she met a fierce-looking man. ‘What are you doing here?’ she said. ‘Go out of the house!’ Possibly her resolute air made him think she was not alone; he turned and Octavia, following close, put him from the door and bolted it. The danger was over; the money untouched; and overcome with the strain, she sank weeping on the floor.

Octavia was still in her teens when she made Ruskin’s acquaintance. Though she was never an ‘Adèle’ or a ‘Rosie’ to him, he was at once interested. He gave her drawing lessons and commissioned her to copy Turner, Dürer, Bellini, etc., at Dulwich or

from the collections in the big house at Denmark Hill, with the cedar on the lawn, where Ruskin lived with his parents in stately Victorian comfort. To Octavia, the lessons and talks were golden hours looked forward to and gone over with eager hope and joy. Ruskin recognised the power shining in the girl's eyes and her enthusiasm and passionate faith in her fellow human beings. Sometimes he spoke sadly, even bitterly, of his own experience. Later on Octavia confided to him her first schemes for better housing. She saw that wretched housing was at the root of most of the misery in London. Her first idea was a model tenement house with a garden; she collected information and showed Ruskin her plans. His father had lately died; he had money at his disposal and was anxious to do public work. He offered to help and wrote to her: 'Believe me, you will give me one of the greatest pleasures yet possible to me by enabling me to be of use in this particular manner and to these ends.'<sup>1</sup> This was in April, 1864.

Octavia often walked eight miles, to save 'bus fares, in her journey to and from Ruskin's house, and stood painting for five or six hours a day at Dulwich. She was footsore and weary, but she could hear the birds in the fields and gardens as she tramped along; sometimes she even sang herself, for she was happy and full of hope. Ruskin bought the property which Octavia was to manage: this was Paradise Place in Marylebone. In her first playground he planted trees, and a number of friends contributed tiles for a motto on the walls, chosen by Octavia: 'Every house is bullded by some, but He that built all things is God.' A maypole festival was instituted here and cowslip bunches distributed in hundreds each spring. Other friends followed Ruskin's example and bought houses which they put under Octavia's management. Gradually she gathered a band of voluntary workers to help in rent-collecting and to be friends and advisers to the tenants. The work was extremely difficult at first; inspection was not enforced; standards of living incredibly low; the drainage was foul and rooms infested with vermin; everywhere was noise and overcrowding. 'I think,' said Octavia, 'the hardest thing in the lot of the poor is that, from the day they are born till when they die, they are *never alone*.' Slowly and steadily she got the houses into order. One court she took over was a by-word so that no one could get work who gave that address. Octavia changed the name and turned the cellars (formerly let to tenants) into a hall for 'social evenings.' Wash-houses were made and a

<sup>1</sup> Life of Octavia Hill, p. 212.

bath, where one of my aunts undertook the heroic task of scrubbing the children on Saturday nights. A generation later she visited the place; the people had not moved; many names were the same, but what a change in the children! 'Bert,' whose father she remembered in rags, wore a neat sailor suit; 'Lily,' whose parents knew no comb, had curled hair and a ribbon.

At first the tenants' outings were an anxiety; 'rough' characters gave trouble, like the drunken man who, refused admission to the steamer taking the party down the Thames, stood on the pier at London Bridge, tearing off his clothes and shouting he would 'swim after them.'

Every summer a large party was entertained near Reading by Octavia's stepbrother, Mr. Arthur Hill. At the country station we were met by 'vans' drawn by farm horses, and into these were stowed children, the old or feeble, while the 'helpers' brought along the rest on foot. Benevolently watchful, walked Octavia. A wayside pub was a danger-point past which one or two men had to be tactfully steered. 'Mr. So-and-So, you know the road—straight on—you'll lead us!' No one lagged and Octavia never raised her voice; it had a clear resounding quality which made each word impressive and distinct.

What veal and ham pie—what plum tart—awaited us at the end of the walk! And at the close of a happy day the kind host and hostess had a nosegay for each guest of pinks and phlox from the old garden. Summer, too, brought the tenants' Flower Show in South London. To the 'Potflower Class' women contributed geraniums with every leaf washed as if it were a baby. A first prize went to a sweep's garden—all soot and Creeping Jenny—a study in black and gold! Two boys dragged in an exhibit of ivy growing in an old bath!

In winter, there were regular Sunday afternoons at Red Cross Hall when Mrs. Julian Marshall came with her band. How cheerful the Hall looked as one turned in from cold streets still littered with Saturday's refuse and the fog thick and white on the river. The place was packed with men, women and children; gas lit up Walter Crane's frescoes and the music of piano and fiddles came through the warm mist of smoke and steaming tea. The Sunday before Christmas we had carols. Never shall I forget Octavia as she led the singing of her favourite 'The First Nowel.' Not a line must be omitted; we sang all the verses from beginning to end. She stood erect, in her wide hat, facing the audience. Her hand moved



in time, her voice resonant among all the other voices which, gaining force as all joined in, grew to a tempest of singing : ' Nowel ! Nowel ! Nowel ! ' Her eyes glowed with inexpressible joy and with, I am sure, faith in the goodness of God.

In my experience, Octavia Hill rarely spoke directly of religious questions. She and Miranda had left the Unitarian body to which the family originally belonged and to which the mother and one sister always adhered. They joined the Church, but Octavia paid much less attention than most of her contemporaries to differences of sects and creeds. She disapproved of much philanthropic Church work, thinking that it encouraged hypocrisy in the recipients of charity. From extremes of ritual or from any ' Evangelicalism ' of an emotional kind she instinctively withdrew ; foreign missions did not interest her, and she disapproved of the conventual life. Her goddaughter told me how Octavia dissuaded her from entering an Anglican order. ' She had no sympathy with the idea. ' In fact she even disliked all habits, uniforms and badges, as tending to destroy individuality. ' Why must people dress up to show what they are ? ' she would say. Hers was not the ascetic ideal—not that of St. Theresa, the mystic and nun, nor yet of Elizabeth Fry, the wife and mother leaving her home to preach in the gaol or go on a missionary journey. She did not feel herself charged with a special message to the world other than the example of her life ; she had no ambition to be a ' reformer ' in the sense of one who breaks down abuses. Her desire was ever to build up the best of what was already there. I cannot help thinking that if Octavia had married she would have dropped her work and been entirely absorbed in her domestic life. Everything for her had root in the ideal of family and home. With her first savings she had furnished the rooms where she and her mother and sisters lodged. No one can forget the kindly atmosphere and peace of 190, Marylebone Road, where Octavia and Miranda lived after they had given up their school in Nottingham Place. They settled here in 1902, and here, ten years later, Octavia died. Turning from the noisy street, you were greeted by gay flowers in the tiny front garden. In the drawing-room upstairs one heard the roar of the traffic, and underground trains shook the house every three minutes, yet a sense of tranquillity prevailed. The large windows had spotless curtains ; there were always flowers on the table ; Octavia's water-colours hung on the distempered walls. At the back was a little room where she worked—the bedroom where she died. On

Fridays, friends came in to tea; Sir Robert Hunter, who with Canon Rawnsley and Octavia founded the National Trust, or visitors from America, Denmark or Holland studying house management. Miss Cons came—who started the Old Vic' and whose niece, Miss Lilian Baylis, has made it so famous for Shakespeare and Opera.

Year by year Octavia Hill's work increased, as one property after another was put under her management. With this grew an army of voluntary and paid workers; many were young girls, and Miranda said, laughing: 'Octavia is like St. Ursula with her eleven thousand virgins!' About 1889 the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had made over to her care a great part of their property in Southwark; she also undertook management of houses in Deptford and, later, Notting Dale. Her work was spread over London, and she was at one time responsible for as many as twenty-six separate banking accounts. Though she never rested till Saturday came, she *seemed* to have leisure, and work did not oppress or flurry her. The highly-strung side of her character showed otherwise; journeys made her nervous, also horses and driving.

Octavia and her generation were influenced by sentiment and literary feeling in art. In her illuminations Octavia used the glowing red and blue she loved for the words which stirred her heart. Her water-colours of Switzerland and the Tyrol had vigour and individuality not often seen in amateur painting of that time, and though she copied for years under Ruskin's fastidious direction, she kept her own style in painting just as her writing was little affected by his compelling prose. The houses of that generation had vast accumulations of ornaments, but her drawing-room had few 'souvenirs'; only the statue of Joan of Arc brought from Domrémy. She used, however, to show some photographs given her by the Princess Alice, who had been interested in her work and had her book, *Homes of the London Poor*, translated into German. One showed the Empress Frederick holding tight her son the ex-Kaiser, a small boy struggling not to be photographed. The Princess had talked freely of her family and with special affection of 'Bertie' (the late King Edward).

No remembrance of Octavia Hill would be complete which did not include that of her closest friend in later years, Miss Hariot Yorke, who shared her work and watched over her health and happiness by day and night. Miss Yorke came into her life when most needed. In 1877 a personal sorrow struck and wounded

Octavia, and soon after came the breach with Ruskin, caused by his illness and capricious misunderstanding of a few idly repeated words. Added to all, Octavia was exhausted and worn out with work. She fell seriously ill. Then Miss Yorke came to the rescue; carried her to new scenes, and for a year they travelled abroad. Miss Yorke spoke French and Italian and was admirable at foreign travel. Moreover, she had a power of sympathy delicate as it was understanding. Her big voice, once irreverently compared to a drill sergeant's on parade, went with a high-bred tact and quick insight into character. She left an existence of ease and social importance to share Octavia's life and home. With Miranda, they lived all together, and the same grave at Crockham holds the three friends. Octavia used to call her 'keeper,' because Miss Yorke acted as keeper to the famous 'lion' Octavia. Some said Octavia grew steadily more and more Conservative as she got older. 'Ockey gets more and more of a Tory,' said Aunt Mary, who admired Gladstone. It was attributed to Miss Yorke's influence. Her influence certainly counted for much; it was like that of a wise wife on a clever husband. Octavia did not really care about party politics, except as they effected what she considered the betterment of the poor. She told us that she had had interviews with both Gladstone and the late Lord Salisbury (who was a personal friend), and that neither one nor the other had knowledge of the condition of the poor nor any practical remedy to offer. Critics who now accuse her of 'patching up' bad things, because she took old houses and put them in order, forget that the houses which are now justly condemned were newer then and had not suffered the deterioration consequent on the War. Some of her contemporaries were actually shocked because the house properties paid 5 per cent., ignoring the voluntary work and almost daily effort for the tenants' welfare by educated women. I was often asked, 'Aren't you always turning people out who can't pay?' If a tenant was out of work, a job was generally found for him in the buildings, painting, cleaning, etc. I personally only remember one being evicted; he had delirium tremens and threw a lighted lamp, which made him an undesirable neighbour. As for rent-collecting being a barrier to friendly intercourse, I remember that, after collecting perhaps thirty rents (5s. 9d. for two, 8s. for four, rooms; single rooms at 2s.), it was hard to get round the buildings by one o'clock with so much news to hear and chat over since last Monday.

Octavia had a great feeling about the responsibility of those

possessed of money. 'They are people *fit* to have money,' she said of some friends. At a meeting of great property owners, she once urged certain expenditure. 'Miss Hill,' cried a duke in alarm, 'do you wish to *tax* the landlords?' 'No, your Grace,' came the reply, 'I wish the landlords to tax themselves.' Only a few far-sighted friends helped Octavia in her early efforts to save open places: she was 'a voice crying in the wilderness' of brick and mortar which was then recklessly spreading far and wide, in and around London. Vainly she fought for Bunhill Fields in the City Road, and for meadows, long since vanished, near Swiss Cottage. But she secured Parliament Hill, many city churchyards, gardens and playgrounds, besides the great purchases of the National Trust like Brandlehow. She told my sister that as she travelled by a certain railway she passed near at least six points where she had won places of refreshment and beauty for the public for ever. It gave her great joy, she said.

In her work and ideals, Octavia's mother had always counted for much, and she was greatly honoured as the head of the family when I remember her, nearly ninety, small and thin, in a red knitted cape, with bright, deep-set eyes. She used no glasses for reading, and her voice, recognisable anywhere, was clear and resonant, and decided as were her opinions. My father, staying in an hotel at Ravenna, overheard someone reading aloud in the next room; the reading paused and a voice rang out: 'And was Theoderic any the worse because he was an Arian?' 'Mrs. Hill!' he said: it was. Rumour whispered that Dickens put Mrs. Hill into one of his novels. (Dickens's contemporaries no doubt often imagined likenesses in his characters.) Octavia herself laughingly told us that 'Mr. and Mrs. Garland' were said to be drawn from the Howitts because Dickens saw them driving merrily with a tiny pony and phaeton. In her youth Mrs. Hill wrote pamphlets on education. She was always serenely optimistic and a worthy daughter of Dr. Southwood Smith, a pioneer in Public Health reform. My sister and I got to know Miss Octavia best when we stayed for weekends at Miss Yorke's house at Crockham in Kent. Larksfield was a red-brick house, built high above the Weald. The garden, planted by Miss Yorke, seemed to express the owner's generous heart; there were huge clumps of scarlet poppies and yards of pinks exuding fragrance and honey all along the sandy paths. Through the hedge, one saw the heather and pines of the Common and the Edenbridge road down to the village. Just below, it passed Kent

Hatch, the Sussex boundary, and Octavia used to recall the local legend that Queen Elizabeth quaffed ale there, and looking over the Weald, 'thanked God she ruled so fair a land.'

We travelled down with our hosts, all meeting at Victoria on Saturday morning. Exactly on time appeared Miss Yorke, laden with hospitable baskets, followed by Miss Octavia in a cape and round, childlike hat, with a bag of papers and correspondence and the day's *Times* under her arm. Besides ourselves there might be other visitors—workers, varying from a young pupil teacher to the daughter of a duke. We all crowded into a third-class carriage, and as we went along, Octavia read from the paper or commented on what we passed. Once when we deplored the endless stretches of the suburbs, she replied severely, 'We mustn't grudge them: it all means *homes*!' Nothing escaped her: 'Look at that man on the platform—he walks like Mr. Ruskin!'

Arrived at Oxted, we climbed with our luggage into the 'waggonette.' Always the same procedure. Larksfield was reached about noon. Then not a moment was lost; off went Miss Octavia's hat and cape, on went an ancient dress and boots, and in another minute she was hard at her favourite recreation—weeding—rooting out with a spud the dog-mercury on the bank to give the primroses a better chance. How characteristic it was, we thought! 'Dinner' (early, to suit the cook) was sharp at one: hot joint and suet pudding. Octavia enjoyed a glass of cider or beer. She had a good appetite but noticed little what she ate or drank. Though then both on in middle life, neither she nor Miss Yorke rested for a moment, and we younger ones felt a trifle ashamed of an inclination for repose after our hearty meal. All started off on a four-mile walk over steep heathery paths to inspect new cottages or the well which Octavia had recently made on the top of the Chart. Before this, she said, the villagers had to walk a mile to get dirty water at the foot of the hill. She was proud of her well, ninety feet deep, with its fine coping and roof, and related how the local dowser gave the depth at which water would be found correctly to within two feet. Only lately I read in *The Times* of the boon which this well, now worked by electricity, is to the whole neighbourhood in years of drought. Tea, on our return, in the garden or dining-room, was delightful, with honey and scones and leisurely talk. Sometimes a niece and her husband and children came in: Octavia would be beaming—quite absorbed in their affairs. Every link of her family was to her precious,

After Sunday church, we walked in the woods. She talked of the changes since her youth, never, as I remember, with regret and often with mirth. She said the genteel prudery of old country-towns was incredible. Mary Harris, when a girl in Cumberland, knew a young lady working a sampler with a verse about the duty of 'husbanding your time,' who thought 'husband' indelicate and substituted 'mama your time'! Octavia would often pause to note the bronzing bracken or to gather the crimson bramble leaves. She had painted these for Ruskin. The bramble with its wide-flung growth and changing leaves, white blossom and black fruit, was her favourite plant. 'And it covers the bare and dusty places,' she said. One day she was at pains to collect 'conkers' to bring back to some poor children.

In the evening she would read aloud *Modern Painters* or her beloved Lowell or Browning; sitting in the window with her feet up, covered by a crochet rug. She read well and with a voice which never tired. Once she spoke to us of the rift with Ruskin. He had turned against her—his old friend and pupil. She had forgiven and there had been a reconciliation. All that was best in the past she kept.

Monday morning brought hurried departure. With sheaves of flowers wrapped in newspaper and dripping from the bath where they had reposed overnight, we reached Victoria. Octavia and Miss Yorke got into a 'fourwheeler' with their bags and flowers for the tenants; it might be to go off rent-collecting or to a meeting of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners or the National Trust. During all the strenuous week, lunch for them consisted of sandwiches and they did not rest till evening. We often wished Miss Octavia had spared herself more in these years which, compared with her youth, seemed to her of comparative ease. 'Now we are older,' she would say, 'Miranda and I rest and we take cabs when we are tired.' The strain of the past told, however, on the beloved sisters. Miranda died in 1910, and in the summer of 1912 we heard that Octavia was ill. When we saw her at Crockham she sat in the garden, for the least walking made her breathless. But she drove in the afternoon with the sun on the white road and the Common golden with gorse. The breeze brought her refreshment as did the 'blue distance' she so loved. Next morning we said good-bye to her in her bed by the window. I never saw her again. In London, two days before she died, she sent for my sister to tell her how much good she felt the Rugby Girls' Club was doing in Notting

Dale. News of her illness was kept as private as possible, but enquirers flocked to the door. Happily she lived to hear that 'Mariners,' a beautiful Kentish headland, was secured to the public. With her family round her, she died on the evening of August 13, 1912, aged seventy-four.

Octavia Hill said emphatically that she wished 'to found no special system.' 'New circumstances,' she wrote, 'require various efforts; it is the spirit, not the dead form, that should be perpetuated.'<sup>1</sup>

If she were living now, she would probably have modified or expanded many of her methods; certainly she would have realised and rejoiced in the raised standards of living. But her desire was, and would ever have been, for individual human kindness and co-operation as the foundation of every scheme of Housing.

The work she did for London can be seen to-day in houses she built and in the open spaces secured before it was too late. London has no monument to her memory; no tablet in Marylebone, Westminster, Deptford or Southwark, where she worked. Her sculptured figure lies in the village church at Crockham. Perhaps she would have preferred this to be so. But should her countrymen be thus satisfied? Surely some words should testify to what she did for her own and for future times? When the present majestic plans for Housing are accomplished, the slums cleared and new houses built, surely some memorial to Octavia Hill should be set up in London, for which she worked with the lifelong love and compassion of a great heart.

<sup>1</sup> At the presentation of her portrait by Sargent, 1893.

*SAIL COMES BACK.*

BY C. FOX SMITH.

SAIL, people were saying twelve months ago, was dead. As dead as a doornail, as dead as Queen Anne—and with no more chance of resuscitation than either of those two time-honoured symbols of material mortality. Just a few, indeed, mainly among the Baltic nations whence the Anglo-Saxon seafaring tradition came, still held to the old ideals, maintaining that he who would follow the sea successfully should above all things know the sea, and that such knowledge can be obtained in a wind-driven vessel better than elsewhere. But they were in a hopeless minority, and even the usefulness of such ‘sailorizing’ training as survived in the modern school ship had begun to be questioned.

‘What is the sense,’ the argument ran, ‘of a boy wasting a large part of his school life learning things which he is never going to have to put to any practical use whatsoever? What is the good of teaching a fellow to splice and serve and parcel, and cut and sew sails, and all the rest of the obsolete shellback stuff, when he will go straight away into a modern cargo tramp without a fathom of hemp rope on board, or a yard of canvas except a bridge dodger?’

And then—things happened, as things somehow have a little way of doing when man’s inventiveness begins to make him just a trifle too big for his boots.

There was a succession of unusually heavy gales in the Western Ocean, as a result of which the air quivered with wireless calls for help from steamships—big modern cargo vessels—disabled in mid-Atlantic. In some cases the crews were taken off successfully. In others the would-be rescuers, battling with winds and seas, searched without result. For, in this enlightened twentieth century, ships with all the latest resources of invention at their disposal can go down to Davy Jones just as easily as ever they did. Perhaps, in certain circumstances, even more easily, since there is nothing under God’s sky more dumb and dead and helpless than a steamship out of control.

Now it has been demonstrated over and over again both in peace and war that the average steamboatman, taking him by and large, is every bit as good a man at his job as his forerunner of the sail. In some ways he may be even better. Nevertheless,



there has emerged from those tragic happenings in the North Atlantic the fact that if those ships had carried a suit of emergency canvas, enough to bring them and keep them head to wind, as well as men skilled in the handling of the same, they might—probably would—have been able to ride out the worst of the weather, with a consequent saving in the way of ships and cargoes, to say nothing of such minor matters as a score or so of seamen's and firemen's lives. There has been a good deal of talk, some of which may be well-founded, some probably sailor's gossip such as always circulates after such occurrences, about the seaworthiness of the ships concerned. But, leaving all that on one side, the upshot of it all is that the unexpected has happened. Sail is coming back.

Not in its old form, it is true. The lofty swaying towers of canvas are gone, in all likelihood, never to return. But at least the ancient lore of the sail is to be kept alive. Training in the handling of vessels under sail is to form a part of the essential equipment of the British sea officer both in the mercantile marine and in the naval service, and the probability is that other countries will follow suit. With the sail will of necessity return 'Sails,' the time-honoured sea craftsman whose palm and needle had come to be almost as much an anachronism in a modern steel freighter as the shipwright's adze. He too under the new dispensation will be a man of quite another type than those ancient men who have been thirty times round the Horn in square-riggers, and who are to be found to-day stitching away in lofts ashore at sails for pleasure yachts or awnings for motor-boats. But here too the old craft which has played so great a part in the world's commerce and discovery will continue to be a living thing instead of becoming a mere bone for antiquarians to wrangle over, like the specifications of the Great Harry.

Now here is a true story; and although the events recorded in it happened round about twenty-five years ago, it is to-day very much to the point.

There was a certain ship—let us call her the *Pandora*, though her real name was something quite different—which left Cardiff on her maiden voyage with a cargo of coal and a consignment of gunny-sacks for a South American nitrate port. She was of the latest type of steam freighter of her time, well-fitted and well-found, and her skipper was very proud of her.

There is, as everyone knows, always a certain amount of anxiety

about a first voyage, be it of steam or motor or sailing ship. Some hidden weakness may manifest itself. Some unsuspected flaw may develop. You never know with any sort of mechanical contrivance until you have tried.

But in the case of the *Pandora* everything went as smoothly as possible. The weather was good, even in the high South latitudes, and all was well until she had left the Straits of Magellan behind and was climbing the hill towards her port of destination.

Then, quite suddenly, without warning of any kind, her propeller snapped clean off like a carrot, and plunged down into the unplumbable depths of the South Pacific Ocean.

Have you ever wakened suddenly out of your sleep in your berth on board ship, disquietingly aware that for some reason unknown the engines whose rhythmic pulsing lulled you to sleep have stopped? It is an uncomfortable sort of feeling at the best of times, that tense listening in an unnatural silence for the sound which ought to be there. But in nine cases out of ten the engines soon take up their song again, and you turn clean over and go to sleep.

In the case of the *Pandora*, however, it was a silence which lasted. There was simply nothing to be done. The damage could not be repaired until she could be drydocked. And—there is no drydock in the middle of the South Pacific Ocean!

So the *Pandora* started to drift, stern first. The wind and current were steady from the nor'-west, and they joined forces to help her along, until she was back in the latitude of the entrance to Magellan's Strait. Then, the wind and the current still pushing her, and still stern first, she drifted into the midst of that fearsome raffle of rocks, and reefs, and barren islands, and deep cold fiords fed by the Fuegian glaciers, in which the South American continent reaches out towards the ice of the Antarctic. How she ever came out of it alive, the captain, telling the tale in after years, said he could never understand. She was as helpless as a driftlog. Yet either sheer luck, or else that special Providence which cares for children and drunken men and all blind, helpless, drifting things, saved her. In and out—and always stern first, like the Mevagsissey bee of Cornish tradition—she blundered through channels which no shipmaster in his senses would ever have dreamed of entering, and where—if he had done so—he would assuredly have lost both ship and reputation.

At last she was clear of the land again, and still she drifted,

her captain checking her position day by day, and conscientiously pencilling on the chart the record of her amazing course.

And then there came a time when he could do even that no longer. She had drifted clean off the chart !

The realisation of that fact gave him a terrible jolt. So long as he had been able to keep up the routine of checking her day's work and entering it up in the log it had given him a sort of hold on reasonable everyday life, a feeling that though he might be living in a nightmare for the time being, there must come a moment when he would wake out of it. Now, he seemed to have come to the end of everything. He must have experienced a feeling very like that of the early voyagers when they believed themselves to be uncomfortably near the place where the ocean poured off the edge of the world into the void.

There he sat in the chart-room, staring at the spot where the pencil line walked off the chart into space. He was done ; he had come to a dead end. Yet all the time, somewhere at the back of his mind, he was aware of something knocking at the door of his consciousness, something immensely significant which was only waiting to be recognised. His mind kept mechanically going over all the incidents of the voyage up to that fateful moment when the ship had died on him there in the South Pacific. He remembered all sorts of trivial little happenings . . . the day the *Pandora* left Cardiff . . . how mad he had been when he came on board and found the ship full of balls of twine . . . they had sent him a gross instead of a dozen . . . a gross of balls of twine , . . a gross of balls of twine. . . .

He sat staring that fact in the face, as it were, for a full minute or more before he recognised in it the thing that had been all this time shouting and hammering at the door of his memory.

Then it came to him like a lightning flash. He jumped up and rushed out on deck.

'Mister !' The mate, standing leaning hopelessly on the bridge rail, spun round, startled by the urgency of his tone.

'Mister ! Have you got a palm and needle ?'

The mate stared. So the Old Man was going mad, he thought, to add to their troubles.

'Why, yes——'

'Get those gunnies up on deck and those balls of twine they brought on board just before we sailed. Put all the hands that can use a needle to work and we'll make a sail.'

They did it. To those men, watching the dragging days go by, the chance of doing something was as welcome as food to the hungry. Two more palms and needles were produced from the forecastle as well as the mate's, and all who could turned to with a will, stitching furiously watch and watch.

And just then the *Pandora* was spoken by a German barque which had also got unusually far to the southward. Her skipper offered to take the crew off if it was thought necessary to abandon the ship.

The *Pandora's* captain called his ship's company together and put the whole case, as he saw it, before them. He kept nothing back. He pointed out that if the wind still held in the same quarter the ship would drift so far to the southward as to be out of the track of all shipping except, possibly, a stray whaler, and that, should they have to abandon her then, it would be very long odds against their being able to make the land in the boats. *But*—she was a new ship, sound and seaworthy, and he was very unwilling to abandon her without making a fight for it. 'If you will trust me,' he concluded, 'I believe I can get her into port.' He then asked all those who wished to be transferred to the barque to stand forward. Not a man did so.

In due course the sail was finished. And the very next day the wind changed.

They bent the sail—surely a queerer was never seen—to the cargo derricks, the nearest thing to a yard the *Pandora* owned, and squared her away before the wind to the north-east. She made slow progress, no more than a knot or two in an hour; but the sound of the water gurgling under her forefoot once more was the sweetest music the skipper's ears had ever heard.

She made the Falkland Islands at long last, and signalled for a tug to take her into Port Stanley. It was blowing pretty hard at the time, and the boat which answered her signal replied that she was 'Short of coal.' 'Short of coal'—what an irony, with the *Pandora's* bunkers still half-full, and a whole cargo to go at into the bargain! However, there was nothing for it. It blew a full gale during the night, and there she had to lie till morning, with the possibility ever before the captain's eyes that she might drag her anchor and drift, all helpless as she was, on that dreaded graveyard of ships. Those hours of darkness were harder to live through than all the rest had been; but the dawn came, and with it the tug at last. The *Pandora's* strange Odyssey was over.

*SPLIT STICKS.*

BY LAWRENCE WATERMAN.

YESTERDAY I went to a funeral, a very simple funeral. There were just two men bearing a bamboo pole from which hung a limp motionless figure tied up in sacking—that was all. There were no prayers, no priest, no mourners, only the four of us, the two bearers, the dead and myself, and but for the strangest of strange happenings there would only have been three. I had come in tired that afternoon and was lying half-asleep in my hammock when suddenly a faint sweet perfume seemed to fill the room and I felt something soft as silk laid lightly against my cheek. Curiously enough I wasn't startled; it all seemed so natural that I didn't even move, but glancing down I saw that it was a lustrous coil of woman's hair, black as night and wondrously fine. I raised my hand to touch it, but as suddenly as it had come it was gone again, leaving me with a curious sense of depression. Where had I seen that hair before? Where had I smelt that faint sweet perfume? I asked myself, but puzzle as I would the recollection did not come. At length it began to worry me. Restlessly I got up. I would go for a walk, I decided, perhaps the afternoon breeze would blow away my strange fancies, so I dressed and went out.

How exactly everything is ordered! Had I been a minute earlier or a minute later this story would never have been written, but as it is—well, here it is!

I was just walking past the door of the doctor's surgery when the two men came out with their pitiful burden. I stood respectfully uncovered until they had passed, then turning, threw a glance of enquiry to the doctor who had followed them to the door.

'Quite natural,' he said, divining my look. 'He was an old man of over seventy.'

'Heart?' I enquired.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. 'Weariness, I think,' he replied. 'The very old find little joy in life, and I don't think he wanted to live.'

I looked again towards the sad little procession. 'Where are they going? They can't get to the cemetery that way,' I remarked.

‘They aren’t going to the cemetery,’ she answered a trifle grimly ;  
‘it’s old Guaimaral.’

‘Guaimaral!’ So that was why there were no mourners, that was why he was to be buried like a rat in any casual hole that happened. No, of course they could not defile their consecrated ground with the body of one who was in league with the devil, and how could a poor Indian expect to have friends. True everyone knew of him, for he had lived in the little hut within the shade of the forest for the past fifty years, but then he had lived a life to himself, speaking to no one, seldom seen, shunning all and shunned by all. No, no one cared whether he lived or died, but though they did not know it he did have one friend, a friend who would at least see him to his last resting-place.

I turned and hurried after the men and their limp burden. Presently I caught them up, and seeing how the body swung to and fro from its dependent ropes, I stepped to its side and rested my hand on it to keep it still. The people we passed looked curiously at us and crossed themselves, but said no word. The bearers too were silent. Their bodies, naked to the waist, gleamed with sweat, but their faces were like masks of ebony, fixed and expressionless. Only the frightened rolling of their eyes showed how little they relished their task.

Soon we came to the outskirts of the town, and turning to the right along a track which skirted the edge of the forest, we arrived at length upon a small clearing, back of which, and in the shade of the trees, had been built a rude trash hut. In the centre of the clearing, and but a few paces from the door of the hut, was a shallow grave, and the two bearers, approaching this, flung their senseless burden carelessly to the ground and commenced unknotting the cords. Suddenly, as I stood watching them, the remembrance and significance of the dream of but a short hour before flashed into my mind. I knew what was required of me, so motioning the men to cease their labours I hurried into the hut.

It did not take me long, for I knew where to look. There at the head of the couch of skins was a block of wood, slightly hollowed in the middle, which had done service as a pillow for my unfortunate friend. Turning this over I drew from a cavity cut in its under side a small wooden casket. It was a lovely object, for though simply made and without ornamentation, so skilful had been the craftsmanship that it was impossible to detect how it had been joined. Its real beauty, though, lay in the wood itself, which was of a wonderful golden colour and grained with delicate veins of the

deepest red, and the whole thing had been polished to an extraordinary brilliancy. Opening this casket, I drew from its interior a long coil of woman's hair. It was wonderful hair; soft and as fine as silk, it shimmered with a curious lustre, and there exhaled from it a faint sweet perfume. I returned with it to the grave and found that the two men had finished unstrapping the corpse and were standing mute and motionless, their arms crossed across their chests. They watched with curious eyes as I folded back the sacking and exposed the face of the dead. It seemed younger, somehow. The wrinkles had smoothed themselves out, and there was about it a look of calm repose as though he had found in death the happiness he had sought for so vainly in life.

Gently I laid the coil of hair against the shrunken cheek, and covering the face with my handkerchief, I rolled back the sacking into its former position. Obedient to my gesture, the blacks stepped forward, and, one at either end, lowered the body into the grave. I was just about to order the replacing of the earth when another thought struck me. For a moment I hesitated. After all, I thought, it would be only justice, so, mind made up, I again hurried into the hut.

This time I went to the foot of the couch, and raising the skins, drew from beneath them a skull. It was yellowed with age, and there was a great cleft in it, splitting it open almost to the nose, as though its owner had died hewn down by some awful sword-stroke. I retraced my steps and knelt beside the grave, then, stretching down into its pitiful shallowness, I lifted the feet of the corpse and placed the skull beneath them.

The blacks watched in terrified fascination. Their eyes rolled horribly and I could hear their teeth chattering with fear; repeatedly they crossed themselves. With the haste of those interring the remains of some hideous crime, they shovelled the earth on to the still, sack-bound figure. Their eyes kept wandering to where I stood and their fear was painful to witness. At last, all being over, they shouldered their implements, and with a last fearful glance in my direction they fairly fled from the place.

For a time I stood silent in thought. Had I done right, or was it the deed of a pagan? Somehow I didn't think so. Grimly I went about the last act of the little tragedy. Entering the hut for the third time, I picked up the wooden casket, and slipping it under my arm, hurried out again. It was the only object of value he had possessed, and I felt that he would like me to keep it as a remembrance. I then drew a box of matches from my pocket, and walking

round the hut, lit it in different places. It didn't take long, for there was a slight breeze and the trash was dry ; soon it was nothing but a heap of smouldering ashes.

It was almost dark now, and returning to the grave, I stood gazing at it for the last time. How lonely it looked in the deepening dusk, and how strange. Yet why should it look so strange ? Ah ! I knew ! Hurriedly I began searching along the edge of the trees, and at length found two pieces of stick. I had nothing to tie them together, but splitting them down to half their length with my penknife, I thrust the split ends into one another and then made a rude cross which I placed at the head of the grave ; then, this done, I turned and hurried away.

A strange funeral, wasn't it ? Perhaps the strangest that has ever been, but the incident of the skull has been worrying me. Was I right in doing it ? Listen, I will tell you the whole story and let you judge for yourselves.

I first met him one day out riding, a bent aged figure staggering under the burden of a great bundle of wood. The path was narrow, so I urged my horse to one side to let him pass, but opposite to me he stumbled, and the stick with which he had been helping himself along fell from his grasp. He stooped and began fumbling in the grass which bordered the track, but was unable to find it. I dismounted and picked it up for him. He straightened up and looked wonderingly at me, and I noticed that his eyes were clear and piercing and did not fall away before my glance. ' Señor,' he said, in a voice curiously strong and resonant for one of his age, ' you should not have done that.' ' Why ?' I queried, mystified. He disregarded my question. ' You are him they call " El Mister," is it not so ?' he asked. I nodded. ' You see,' he continued, ' even I know of " El Mister," but it seems he does not know of me. I am Güaimaral.' Then, seeing I made no reply, he remarked dryly : ' The Señor had better ask in the village who Güaimaral is, but it would be well that he did not mention that he was talking to him,' and giving me a slight nod of thanks, he continued on his way.

Well, as can be imagined, my curiosity was aroused, and on enquiry learnt that he was an Indian of some strange tribe of the interior who had arrived there over fifty years back, built a small hut at the edge of the forest and had lived there ever since. But he was a bad man, they said, a devil in league with the evil one, who practised strange rites with a skull. El Mister would do well to avoid him. Needless to say, this didn't worry me very much,



and a few days later, happening to pass close to where he lived, I turned into his little clearing to see him.

I found him sitting before the door of his hut, and he seemed surprised to see me.

'Did not the Señor enquire about me as I told him to?' he asked by way of greeting.

'Yes,' I replied, 'and everyone told me that you were in league with the Evil One and wanted to go to Hell.'

He smiled faintly. 'And in spite of that the Señor is not afraid to speak with me?' he queried curiously.

I laughed. 'Why should I be,' I said, 'seeing that I am of a different religion to the people here and believe in neither hell nor the devil?'

The old fellow shook his head. 'You are wrong, Señor,' he said with great conviction. 'There is a hell and there is a devil. This I know, for a very wise and good man once told me so, but I am not in league with the devil, though it is true that I desire to go to his hell.'

'You *want* to go to hell?' I gasped in surprise. 'But why?'

The old fellow shook his head again. 'That I may not tell you, Señor,' he said, nor could I get another word out of him on the subject, though I stayed talking to him for nearly an hour.

That was our second meeting, but after this I used to go and see him regularly, and every time I carried him some little present, sometimes it was rice or sugar, sometimes tobacco, and the last time of all a splendid pipe. The old fellow's eyes lit up on seeing it. I suppose he had never smoked anything but a clay pipe in his life, but this was a real wooden one, with a band of silver round the bowl and another round the stem. 'Señor,' he asked in a shaking voice, 'why is it you are so good to me?'

'Who knows, Guaimaral?' I answered, shrugging my shoulders. 'Perhaps it is because you are a stranger and are lonely; I also am a stranger and sometimes I am lonely too; or perhaps it is just because we are friends, who knows.'

'*Si*, Señor,' he answered, 'we are both strangers here, and because you have not believed the evil that men say against me you are also my friend, the first friend I have had since—— But come into my hut, Señor, out of the heat of the sun, and I will tell you why men say these evil things about me, for though often you must have wondered, yet have you never asked. It is good too that someone should hear the story before I die, for perchance those who knew it are now all dead.'

He motioned me into the hut, and after drawing forward a rough

wooden chair for me, seated himself on the bed. 'As you say, Señor,' he began, 'I am a stranger here, for I come from a land that lies far away into the setting sun, two, perhaps three months' journey up the great river.' (He meant the Orinoco not the Amazon, for he was a Venezuelan Indian, and the Venezuelan Indians often refer to the Orinoco as the 'great river.') 'My tribe was small, but we were very proud, and the old men were wont to say that we were the last of a great race who in ages past had ruled all that part of the country, but whether this be so I know not, only that we of the foothills are not as the Indians of the plains, being taller and fairer and of different features.

'There when I was still young came a white man, a priest very good and holy, and when he saw that we received him kindly he said that he would live with us, for he wearied of the way his own people fought among themselves and killed one another.

'Now my people were glad to hear this, for he had great skill in curing the sick, so they built him a hut to live in, and also another much greater where he would pray to his god. And after a while we stopped praying to the sun and the moon who had been our gods, and began to listen to his teachings. He told us about the god who ruled everything, and of the demon his enemy, who lay in wait for all evil men, so that little by little my tribe, who had been warlike before, became peaceful, for all feared to kill lest the demon should carry them to his hell to be tortured for ever.

'Now of all those who listened and obeyed his teaching none was more diligent than I, the chief's son, for I loved this strange white man with a great love, a love greater than I felt for my father or for the woman who bore me, greater than all loves save one only, so that when he died at last from the bite of a snake, so saddening was his memory to me that I could no longer live among my own people, but begging the leave of the chief, my father, I went among the people of a neighbouring and friendly tribe, and stayed with them for close on five years.

'At length there came warriors from my tribe to say that my father had died, and that I, now being chief, must return to my people. So I went with them, and there among the huts of my ancestors I met her who had been my playmate, now grown into a woman more beautiful than ever man had known.'

The old fellow stopped abruptly. His eyes had a far-away look as though he were trying to see through the mists of half a century's separation. 'Oh, Señor,' he burst out suddenly, and in his voice was all the strength and passionate longing of youth, 'she was as

sweet and pure as the flowers, the dawn was in her eyes and the red gold of the sunset on her cheeks. The Mother of God could not have been more beautiful, Señor, and we loved, loved with a love that is given to few, a love not of this world, but of the world above in which the holy man had taught me to believe.'

He stopped again, and a wave of pity swept over me. The years had not darkened his memory of that dear loved figure. His eyes were dim with sorrow and two great tears rolled slowly down the withered cheek: presently he gave a weary sigh and continued in a low monotonous undertone.

'But she could not be my chieftainess, for that was forbidden by the laws of our tribe until I had completed the tests which would class me as a warrior, so we waited for nearly a year, and then when I was of the age I set out with the bravest of my warriors upon the great hunt in which I would have to prove my valour as a man. Three moons that hunt lasted, three moons, for the tests of a chief must be greater than those of a common warrior, and at the end all wondered at my skill in tracking, and at my strength and courage, which even they who were the bravest could not equal. Then when all was over we started for home in great rejoicing, I because I was returning to my flower with fame and honour, and the warriors because their chief had proved himself worthy to rule them.'

Again he paused, and I saw that he was trembling as though at the remembrance of some tragic horror. The sweat started from his brow, his lips curved cruelly downwards, and a maniacal glare came into his eyes. 'But while I was away had come the Spaniard.' It was almost a hiss. 'Curse him, curse him, may he rot in hell, foul despoiler that he was. He saw my sweet rose and coveted her, followed her to the river one day at sundown.' He lifted a shaking hand and wiped the great drops of sweat from his forehead. 'Oh, Señor,' he cried piteously, 'God is not just to let such things happen. She was so sweet and virgin to be despoiled and sullied by that beast, her tender flesh bruised by those cruel fingers, all her dear hopes of love and happiness turned to bitterness and despair.'

The memory of the tragedy overcame him, and bowing, he hid his agonised face in his hands, while great sobs shook his aged frame. After a while he regained his composure a little and continued in a low strained voice: 'The people of my tribe would have killed him for the deed, only they feared my wrath; that privilege could be mine only, so they kept him a prisoner until my coming.'

'Well I remember the day. We entered the village just before sunset, and it was as a king I came, decked with flowers and with

the song of my prowess on the lips of my warriors. But where we had thought to find joy we found only sorrow, and all stood with downcast heads as though in shame. The song died on our lips, and in its place there reigned a great silence—and then I saw her coming. Swift and light as a bird she came, scarce seeming to touch the ground, her unbound hair streaming behind like a black cloud in the storm winds.

‘I sprang forward with a glad cry to fold her in my arms, but ’twas never done. I saw the terrible look in her face, a look that might have come from one standing at the very threshold of hell. The blood froze in my veins, chilled me like some ice wind, and I stood as one turned to stone, arms outstretched and as motionless as death. On she came, looking neither to right nor left but only into my eyes, until with a great cry she sprang between my arms. I felt her snatch the dagger from my waist, but I could not move. One last look she gave me, a last terrible look, and then it was over; she lay at my feet, the dagger in her breast.’

He drew a hissing breath. ‘Señor, what would you have done to that man? Would you not have killed him as I did? But I killed as a man should kill, Señor, fighting fairly, my dagger against his. Twice only I struck him, once in the breast, and then as he staggered back, a great slash at his head, holding the dagger as though it were a sword. Look, that you may see how mighty was the stroke.’ He fumbled at the foot of his couch and handed me a yellow skull, almost parted by a cleft which extended from the crown nearly to the nose.

‘But of what good was killing him?’ he continued. ‘Could it return my love? Could it wake to life a heart that, though it still beat, was as dead within me as the pierced heart of my flower? Truly, vengeance it was, and a vengeance which has prisoned me to fifty years of useless life. Do you think I would have lived all these weary years if by one swift thrust I could have gone to join her, Señor? Do you think my courage would have failed me? But no, Señor, there is no courage in doing what the heart desires, but I dared not, for had not the man of God told us that those who sin must suffer in hell? She had killed once—herself—therefore she must go to hell. I also had killed once and so in the fullness of time I must go to suffer at her side, but had I slain myself perchance the demon would have thrust me deeper into his hell for the double sin, and so I would have lost her for ever. But I did not think of that when we fought, only afterwards when it was too late.’

What unnecessary misery can an ill-taught religion bring!

I felt a choking lump rise in my throat and the hot sting of tears in my eyes. The pitiful simplicity of his logic moved me more than the tale itself, for in it I had heard the sufferings of half a century condensed into a few halting words. But what could I do? Could anything I said change the belief of a lifetime, and in a way it was a happiness to him to think that soon he would be going to join her, to ease her sufferings with his presence, perhaps bear them for her. No, far better to let things stay as they were.

‘There is little more to tell, Señor,’ he resumed. ‘To live so close to the memory of that sadness was impossible, so I left my people, taking with me only the head of my enemy and a lock of my beloved’s hair.’ He got up and, taking the casket from its place of concealment, opened it and showed me the coil of hair.

‘For years I travelled seeking forgetfulness, but though my body was young my spirit was that of an old man, so I came here to rest for the old need repose. At first the women courted me, for I was strong and good to look upon, but what had I with women who have held but one woman in my arms? So little by little they left me alone, and when it was known that every night I slept with a woman’s hair on my cheek and my feet on a skull, all thought that I was a wizard. But what did I care? All I wanted was solitude, and thus have I slept each night for close on sixty years, Señor, with her hair against my cheek and the skull of my enemy beneath my foot, and so will I sleep until I die.’

His voice died away into silence and gradually his chin sank upon his breast. For a moment I thought he was sleeping, but suddenly he raised his face and stared straight into my eyes. ‘*Adios, Señor,*’ he said softly, ‘may the gratitude of an old man be with you always.’ It was a dismissal. Silently I arose, and pressing the outstretched hand I left him to his thoughts.

That was the last time I saw him. He died that night, and the rest you know.

Strange, moving story, wasn’t it? But that was yesterday, and to-day he is forgotten. In a month perhaps even the traces of his existence will have faded, for the forest, freed from his restraining hand, will cover all in its mantle of green, and then there will be nothing. Nothing to mark the strange tragedy of his life, nothing to bear witness to the brave spirit of him, nothing to tell the world that there lies a man who for half a century had fought a fight of heroic constancy and won. No, nothing but two split sticks, and in a short time even these will be gone.

*Venezuela.*

*CALLING THE TUNE.*

BY W. F. HENSON.

THE sun, who'd been dressing himself behind the hills, rested his chin on the skyline and surveyed the sleeping world, wiping aside, the while, a tuft of russet clouds that bearded his face. The sun-flowers turned from the east where they'd seen the last of him before the night dews and moths had massaged the crick in their necks. They yawned and stretched yellow petals. God, another cloudless day, another round of glaring up at that golden thing that walked over the sky, when you stood like that long-nosed old fossil of a sundial there in the corner, blushing to the last hair on your stem; waiting for some puff-ball cloud to wander past and blot him out. Then you might luxuriate in a hearty leer in the shadow where he couldn't see. Better, much better, had you been born a violet on a four-inch stalk, skulking deep down in the grasses sleeping with the anemones when the sun was a meagre lemon thing. That was the life! Or to have been a bulb with a juicy stalk, and be cut and shoved in a glass with a crowd of friends. To play the old game of Fall-all-to-one-side with the Lady of the House. Good fun to see the human female's face twisted with rage and impatience, just like old Father Beetroot down behind the flox. Time he was pulled up.

But Flora, or some madcap, had stuck on this surly lion's face with great tufts of green for a collar which prickled at noonday. Mad Margery wore a collar white as a marguerite with bones in it. Anyway, she was the post-mistress. The dew dribbled down your collar at night and you stood with your neck in a pool pulling faces at the fool of a moon who couldn't even keep the same size two nights running. Some nights he didn't appear at all. But you needn't stare at the poor thing as he lay on his back on the hills all flushed in the face, or at the simpleton stars tricked out in patterns up there. Some nights they shot around pointlessly blowing themselves out. It was enough to make an owl laugh.

But there was the sun already high in the blue, no wind, and all the dew dry, and puffs of dust away up the road where the sparrows were bathing in the gutters, tiny spirals of dust whispering around the

butcher-boy's shoes beneath an apron bright as Old Meg's sunblind. There went the smoke awandering bluely from the parson's pipe, and the old men slumped in the light beneath the roses, in the scent of the roses and earth, in the yeast-scents of baking and fretful clattery sounds from the parlours behind. Blackest of shadows on whitest of walls you could see when a cloud sailed by and you winked an eye. And, by Pan, you could hear the mightiest of curses, for Amos the dairy-man had stumbled over his churn with a clang and a splash. The gutters were white now and filled with black cats. And Amos was white and filled with black rage. In the haze and the heat the hills slept steel grey, the sky shimmered dust-grey and far distant. Cecil the constable stood up and stared, like a sunflower.

Then from the hills, through the still air and the tired leaves, through the cornstalks, up the road, through the dust and the rose-petals, the thatch and the thresholds, round by the Vicarage, past the farm and the policeman and Amos and Marion and Meg and the butcher-boy stole the thinnest, sweetest sound that ever shrilled or warbled. Not quite a wail, you understand, but a rambling, bubbling, piping, sharpening and flattening and fawning, such as never sang in flute or reed or bagpipe. Like, perhaps, a penny whistle in an angel's fingers. The lime-trees prattled and shuddered as it shrilled nearer and nearer, raving and cavorting in a mad magical air like the gnats at owl-light.

Then round the corner danced the reddest and roundest man in the world, for the sunlight gleamed pink on his face, danced in the blue of his eyes as he came, as he capered. There on his head sat a shiny silk hat, his cheeks were puffed out like a pumpkin over his tar-black jacket and white striped trousers, over his lavender spats and patent leather shoes that skipped and pranced to the sound of the pipe. Oh the pipe gleamed all gold as the little man tossed his head to the beat of his toes. Now it blew songs to the sun, now babbled confidingly to the ground.

The whole village had rushed to the road with a great banging of doors and rattling of latches, clanking of saucepans and clatter of plates in a scampering scurry of inquisitive feet. Amos and the policeman, Marion and Meg, the baker- and butcher-boy leapt as high as the next till the dust clouded and whirled. The little man blew and skirled. They danced behind, higher and higher till they seemed scarcely to touch the ground and their toes made tiny hollows in the dust. From those pockets of his little black coat

spattered a shower of great golden pieces, green bank-notes, green as the lime-leaf, letters of credit and fine pink cheques. And they surged behind, dancing ever higher, down, down the lane, tireless, though the sweat welled from their brows, made mud with the dust on their cheeks, and their hair tumbled blinding over their eyes as they scrabbled for the fallen gold.

There was now no joy left in the piper's tune.

The sunflowers still gleamed in their collars of green when the little man passed. He had swerved towards them, his pipe uttering a shriek beyond belief. But the petals had fluttered and he saw they weren't really gold. So on, on he pranced with his gold and sweat and his trailing mobs, away over the hills, over the straight white road that the Romans made and at whose farthest end lies a great blackened City.

Really though, even if you are only an old lions' mane of a sunflower, it's not too bad, your roots are cool in the good soil, your face is bright. What matters a piper's tune and a piece of gold; there'll be a dew to-night.

### *HOLY PALMERS' KISS.*

HEART's deep words are deeply hidden,  
Lovely linking is forgone,  
Cherishing caress is done,  
Dear embracings are forbidden.

Only your hand on my hand,  
Downward on my upward palm,  
Resting in immortal calm  
A moment home, in native land.

Barely touching, these hands wake  
The rhythm, the unison complete;  
Not again these palms may meet  
Yet pilgrimage together make.

KATHARINE GARVIN.



*INDIAN MEMORIES.*

BY LETTICE FISHER.

THE news of Rudyard Kipling's death sent my thoughts wandering back to India in the middle eighties, when he was a young journalist, I a little girl, and my father was Legal Member of the Viceroy's Council. In that capacity he (my father) was responsible, during Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty, for the so-called Ilbert Bill, which empowered Indian magistrates to deal with Europeans, and roused a great commotion. Thus it is that my first political memory is of an unusual kind, of hearing how my father had been burnt in effigy. I could not imagine why he, the gentlest of men, should have endured a fate which I had hitherto associated only with Guy Fawkes, nor did any of my attendant grown-ups ever provide an adequate explanation, and the story made a deep impression of bewildered distress upon my youthful mind. Lord Ripon I remember only dimly, but Lord Dufferin was a definite figure in our childish world. We used to go to Viceregal Lodge, where we were properly spoilt by aides-de-camp and secretaries, who aided and abetted me in my passion for collecting crests—such gorgeous gold and many-coloured crests adorned the missives of Indian potentates—were petted by Lady Dufferin, whose beauty awed us, and by her kind and lovely daughter, Lady Helen Blackwood. One of my most vivid childish memories is that of meeting Lord Dufferin riding along the Mall at Simla, no doubt surrounded by his train. He ranged up beside my small pony, and engaged me in agreeable conversation, all of which I forget except the end. 'Remember,' he said, 'that what a Viceroy says is absolutely true. It is better to be pretty than good,' an aphorism which he repeated three times, in impressive tones, and which I am sure he meant most kindly. But I burst into floods of tears, turned my pony and cantered home, refusing to be comforted, unable or unwilling to explain my bitter woe. I possessed three younger sisters, all of them unusually pretty, and in consequence had so often been pitied by well-meaning nurses as the plain one of the family that I had become accustomed rather than resigned to what I believed to be my exceeding ugliness. Actually I think I must have been, though certainly plain, a gay and attractive little girl, but in stern Victorian days it was of our demerits rather than our merits that we heard from those in charge of us.

My parents, with the rest of the Government, spent only the summers in the hills, and went down to Calcutta for the winter. But we little girls were wisely left at Simla for the lovely crisp cold winters, thriving and growing rosy in the snow and the sunshine. Simla was a paradise for children all the year round. We had our ponies, rhododendron trees make good climbing, the heart of a bamboo clump is not only a good hiding-place but a perfect nest for a child with a book, we were adored by the Indian servants and saved from too much spoiling by our strict and admirable Highland governess, who kept us in uncommonly good order. Hers must have been a task of no small difficulty, for there were few other English children, and everyone was ready to make much of us. Little snobs that we were, we rejoiced in our position as the First Children in Simla, those of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief being grown up. I wonder who put that idea into our heads. I well remember our extreme annoyance when we came back to London, where no one knew who we were or paid the slightest attention to us in the streets, where astonished assistants at the Baker Street Bazaar were horrified at my offers to pay, in the approved Eastern manner, half the price they asked for their goods when we went to buy Christmas presents soon after our arrival, where we were treated just like anyone else: an experience more salutary than agreeable. I remember too our mother's acute annoyance at our perpetual demands to be taken home to India, away from this horrid dark, foggy, sunless London. She, I fancy, was very thankful to return.

If there were few English children in Simla, we had endless grown-up friends, and my special devotion was given to Mr. (afterwards Sir Thomas) Holderness, and to the historian Sir William Hunter. He gave me a little alabaster image of Ganesh, telling me that it would bring me good luck. I almost immediately contracted scarlet fever, no one could imagine how, for the disease was, I believe, unknown in India. Ganesh was my main comfort during that illness, for, unlike my dolls, he was washable, and so could remain with me. I can still remember the feeling of his rather uncomfortable contours against my side. He has never left me, and sits above my bed to this day.

When Simla grew too hot and dusty we used to be sent out to Mashobra, where we occupied the top storey of the Retreat, a charming house high up in the woods a few miles from Simla, which belonged to Mr. Buck of the Woods and Forests department. (It is

now, I am told, and has been for many years the summer residence of the Viceroy.) There could be no more blissful home for children. My father early taught us how to look out for snakes, and to distinguish between the dangerous and the harmless. We scrambled about the mountain-paths on foot or on our ponies, searched for wild flowers, watched birds and beasts, climbed trees, explored, were taught by my father how to use our eyes and ears. He, like his old friend and my godfather Lord Bryce, was one of the enviable people who knew something about nearly everything, and a great deal about some things. He was a wonderful outdoor companion, and with him we had glorious walks and scrambles. There was much to see, for all sorts and conditions of men came wandering down the road from the distant north, and I think I can remember caravans of camels, laden ponies (agitating to meet in the tunnel on the Simla road), strange Mongolian faces, and fair, blue-eyed hillmen. Once standing on the verandah I watched our governess ride along, followed by what I believed to be a strange large dog, but was in fact a leopard, which slipped disappointed into the woods just as she reached the turn to the house. Then, poor lady, she became hysterical, for the beast had accompanied her for some time, and she had had great difficulty in controlling her frightened pony. The leopard, she told us, had been sitting in the road. She put her sun umbrella, fortunately up, over the pony's eyes and got past, but was followed all the way home. I well remember the leopard smell, and the rustle of an unseen leopard moving along the hillside above my path, and the trouble I had to keep my pony from plunging down the opposite *khud*. Leopards made it impossible for us to keep our dogs, and till we gave it up in despair there was a succession of tragic disappearances. Once, but only once, I saw a little bear sitting composedly at the foot of a tree. We had been taught that none of these creatures would hurt us, and if we could keep our ponies in hand there was no danger. The *saice*, trotting behind, was no doubt ready to help if needed, but I do not remember ever feeling at all afraid.

In our last Mashobra summer we eagerly helped to rear a baby leopard which eventually found its way to the London Zoo. Our Sunday visits to him were a great comfort to us, homesick as we were for Mashobra hills and woods, and we firmly believed that he recognised us with a pleasure equal to our own. That summer too I devotedly reared a baby parroquet brought to me at about three days old by one of the servants, an unattractive, noisy, hungry

infant. He lived in a deep biscuit-tin, to guard him from rats, woke me by screams for food in the very early hours, but grew to full beauty, came back to England with us, and lived for many years. Another of my home-coming memories is of our annoyed surprise when people stared and laughed at us upon the front at St. Leonards, whither we were sent to get us out of London while our house was being made ready for occupation. We four little girls were dressed exactly alike, had masses of long hair, and I had always a parroquet clinging to one shoulder and a dove perched upon the other. It is not surprising that heads were turned as we went by.

The English seaside in January did not at all comfort us for our lost Indian home. How well I recall the excitement of the rains at Mashobra, the wonderful scents and the feeling of freshness, the break in our daily routine, for during the rains we rushed out of doors whenever the sky cleared and the sun came out, regardless of lesson hours. Nor can I forget the sunsets over the mountains, and the view of the Himalayas from our verandah. I saw it once again when I was grown up, and unlike most childish memories, it was even more glorious than I had remembered.

Mr. Buck, the owner of the Retreat, played a considerable part in our lives. The kindest of men, he showered gifts upon us. One of mine was a trained carrier pigeon, and I still have its portrait, painted by the donor, with a tiny slip of paper round its pink leg, and the inscription 'the messenger who brought back a letter from the Shali,' which, I think, is a somewhat distant mountain. Mr. Buck's chief characteristic was his extreme absent-mindedness, and he was the hero of endless Simla stories. He was entirely managed at home by his manservant, and we, from our upper floor, used to hear his shouted enquiries as to whether he had had his breakfast. If the man was busy his master was told that of course he had, long ago, and we firmly believed that sometimes several breakfasts were consumed in one morning, while quite often our friend went unfed. Mr. Buck had a genius for losing things, and one of my regular tasks was to find them. There would come a call from downstairs, and I would hunt about his dusty room until I discovered the missing letter or glasses or whatever it might be, and be duly rewarded by an anna or two. It was useful training for a life destined to be largely spent in searching for spectacles, collar-studs and papers mislaid by various distinguished persons, beginning with my father.

I remember one particular occasion when an important paper had totally disappeared, and all our hunting was in vain. At last

Wayid the servant dislodged a small piece of dry toast from his master's breast pocket, marched majestically to the breakfast tray, and from the depths of the empty eggshell extracted a tiny fragment of paper. Mr. Buck had torn the letter into strips, dipped it into his egg and consumed it, while he had carefully pocketed the toast. I wish I could remember the many other stories. Only one remains. Our friend had lost his heart to a charming damsel, who seemed not unwilling to return his affection, and a benevolent lady joyfully undertook to provide a suitable opportunity for the required proposal of marriage. A picnic was arranged, and at the right moment Mr. Buck was to be asked to escort the damsel to a position whence a specially attractive view could be obtained. Up to a point all went well and the couple duly reached the selected spot. A long silence followed. The lady became restless. She tapped her foot. She moved from his side. He on his part seemed preoccupied, even distressed, but nothing happened. At last in trouble and anger, poor girl, she turned down the hill, followed by her admirer, who, exclaiming loudly, 'I KNOW that I had something really important to tell you, but I'm blest if I can remember what it was,' was astounded when, bursting into angry tears, she fled.

Parties of people used to ride out to Mashobra for tea or tiffin, and one of my mother's problems was to know how many she dared ask on her own account, for she might always be called upon to provide for an unknown number invited by the owner of the house, who had forgotten all about them and gone off into the wilds. We children used to watch from the verandah to see how many people were coming up the road, and whether we knew them. If they looked like strangers we used to make surreptitious excursions to the lower storey, in order to discover whether there were any signs of hospitable preparation. If there were not, we would rush to warn my mother, who in her turn would anxiously scan the approaching riders. It is among those Sunday riders, our own share of them, that I remember Rudyard Kipling. His gifted and charming father, Lockwood Kipling, was a friend of my parents, and one summer he used to bring with him to Mashobra his lovely daughter Trix, to whom we instantly and completely lost our hearts, and his shy spectacled son. To our joy these two young people, apparently a little uneasy, and Ruddy certainly rather *farouche* among the grown-ups, used to slip round the corner of the verandah into our special area, and there regale us endlessly with the most entrancing stories. They were perfect companions for children, and we hailed their arrival

with heartfelt joy. I rather think we preferred Trix to Ruddy as a story-teller, but both held a high place in our affections. That people who were undoubtedly grown up (though as I now realise only just grown up) should prefer our company to that of the other grown-ups was very endearing, while not only were they extremely good at pretence and games in general, but also their capacity for story-telling was apparently as inexhaustible as our demand. Years later I met one of those stories in R. K.'s published works, a story about a little girl whose ghost haunted the ship from which she had fallen overboard, but, alas, I cannot remember any of the rest.

In later years I gathered from my mother that Ruddy was not altogether *bien vu* among the *mem-sahibs*, and that she was thought to have been very kind to a shy and undistinguished youth when she welcomed him to her Mashobra Sundays, perhaps more for his father's sake than his own. I fancy that the eyes which twinkled at us from behind those glasses of his may have seemed to the *mem-sahibs* too critical, perhaps too penetrating, or perhaps he did not shine at Simla small talk. However that may have been, we adored him, and his father firmly believed in him. Among my mother's treasures was a copy of one of Ruddy's first productions—was it *Departmental Duties*?—with a note from Mr. Lockwood Kipling saying 'I believe the boy will write some day.'

Ruddy and Trix, with many other delights, vanished from our lives when we left India, and I did not meet him again till during or just after the war. Then, one evening, I saw him across the room at one of Lady Astor's glorious parties, those parties where tiaras and tweeds mingled with no apparent self-consciousness, where anyone might turn up, and most people did. It seemed extremely unlikely that he, a famous man, would remember the children with whom he had played upon a Mashobra verandah, and it was with considerable trepidation that I made my way through the crowd and introduced myself. I need not have been afraid. He remembered it all far more clearly than I did myself, and for the rest of the evening regaled me with stories of the little girl I had once been, reminding me of one event after another, and remembering, what I had quite forgotten, that he used to make me, the accepted family story-teller, take turns with him and Trix. I never saw him again, although I sent and received messages through my husband, his fellow member of The Club, and now he is gone, as are, inevitably, nearly all those who peopled the world of my Indian childhood. Their memories remain.

## SHANTIES.

BY CAPPY RICKS.

A WIND-SWEPT deck, green with sea-slime, awash for nearly three weeks, with the ship beating her way from fifty to fifty around the world's most dreaded promontory, Cape Horn, 'where the grey seas glitter and the sharp tides shift.' The order had been given, 'Loose the main upper-tops'l,' but not two boys clawed their way up the ice-armoured shrouds; instead eight men with wooden mallets, stretched out along the yard, took an hour to clear the furled sail of its jacket of ice and frozen snow before the halliards could be taken to the capstan, often under the rushing tide that swept the decks from rail to rail, for the great square of canvas to be set to the lessening of Favonius's might.

Twenty-four worn and dispirited men, soaked to the skin and shivering to the icy mid-winter blast, manned the capstan bars; men with oilskin-chafed neck and wrists, hail-scarred and bleeding hands and faces, who had dragged out a weary existence without hot food or dry clothing for a fortnight, galley and foc's'le having early been gutted-out in the struggle, the only fire in the ship that in the small cabin stove.

In the dispirited band there was, though, left one brave soul, and as the heavy cylinder of steel with its weight of frozen sail commenced the first inch of its ascent up the ice-bound topmast, out broke the 'shanty,' 'Away for the Rio Grande.'

In twenty minutes' time the yard was mast-headed, and halliards were belayed to a strange accompaniment—that of smiling faces, squared shoulders, and aerated blood. The song had done it—the sailor's 'shanty,' the song which now, alas, has gone, swept from the surface of the Seven Seas with the White-wings ships that gave it birth, and the world of the sea is a little the poorer by its passage.

The tune of the shanty was always a simple one, of no great range yet with ample scope for grace notes to meet the fancy; and the words, in the main, but doggerel; but, whatever the theme—personal, national, occupational, humorous, rabelaisian—the key-note was always action, often life with the lid off, and none the worse

for that ; hard-bitten sailormen were not pupils of young ladies' seminaries.

Shantying was the vogue only in English-speaking ships, though often an English shanty was to be heard in a foreign ship where shantyman and others had served in 'Shanty-ships.' The shanties were of two kinds : one for hauling ; and here, where breath had to be conserved and let go only at the peak of effort, the choruses were short—two pulls to each—but what pulls !—while in the capstan shanty they were longer, always with a rollicking tune, the o's and r's rolled on the tongue and prolonged to the utmost effect, always exhilaration.

The American shanties were the most colourful ones, especially when the crews were composed, wholly or in part, of Southern States negroes, with whom melody is life and strong resonant voices the invariable rule. These songs were chiefly of that country's great rivers, its Civil War, Indian chiefs and princesses, and its great and famous Clipper ships which for a generation and more held in their bellying sails the ocean supremacy of the world and in their spacious holds the cream of all ocean-borne traffic.

'Ranzo' was a strong hauling shanty of theirs, and this was in their blood ; for their cradles, alike in the warm Southern States and on the bleak coast of Maine, had been rocked to its rhythm. It told of a New York tailor, who went to sea in a whaler, ultimately to become 'the Captain of her,' and the song was an inspiration and incentive that long outlived the last strains of the air.

The clipper ships were memorialised in a great shanty, 'Blow, bully boys, Blow,' in which the Blows were something to tingle the ear-drums.

'A Yankee ship coming down the river,  
 "Blow, boy-oys, *Blow*";  
 Her masts and yards they shine like silver;  
 "Blow, boys, bully boys, *Blow*"';

and how it lightened the weight of topsail yards and great sails of snow-white cotton canvas.

The negroes' favourite was 'Roll the cotton down':

'Oh'h, were you ever in Mobile Bay,  
 "Roll the cotton down";  
 A'screwing cotton all the day  
 "Oh, Roll the cotton down"';

and their quaint phraseology and great voices made it a thing to be



remembered, for in it they lived; they had spent their boyhood screwing cotton into the holds of the clipper ships, always to sing as they screwed. Another favourite 'cotton' shanty was 'Bound to Alabam,' with the weight on the ultimate syllable, and only negroes know how to make the most of this.

Of their capstan shanties there was none to beat 'Shenandoah' (Shanadoah):

'Shanadoah, I love your daughter,  
"Away-ah, rolling river"' ;

though two others gave it a close run—'Sacramento' with its 'For there's plenty of gold, so I've been told, on the banks of the Sacramento' for chorus, to take one back to the hey-day of Yankee clipper ships in the gold rush around the Horn to California in 'forty-nine and the fifties of last century, stirring times in the sea-trade, and 'Sailing down along the shores of South Amerikee' (the coasts of the Southern States in the Civil War), which brought out all the desperate actions (with nothing lost in the telling) of the rebel cruiser *Merrimac*.

These printed words are cold, poor things only; there is at hand no spacious wind-swept deck, with high bulwarks and deck-houses to catch and throw about the volume of melody, no taut-stretched, dark-clued and humming hollows of sails to give the reverberations that were the very essence of the song; these the old sailor, and he alone, drawing on remembrance, can bring to bear in their full; but yet there must be a little of something in them that will appeal to all who have in their blood a tinge of brine from the salt seas, and an instinct to navigation—the gift of a hundred seamen-ancestors.

From the Yankee 'hell-ships' to the Canadian and Nova Scotia 'Bluenoses' is but a short step; these ships, raking the stars with their trucks, superbly sailed, and hard-driven in wind to the last verge of daring by consummate seamen, had for crews hard-bitten descendants of the old Gallic trappers and backwoodsmen, the ancient 'voyageurs' and 'couriers du bois' with whom melody and fighting were the very breath of life as, trained to whipcord, they swung massive shoulders and lithe bodies to the dip of the flashing paddles, doing their sixty miles a day, taking rapids in their stride and vanquishing cunning and brave Indians, warriors all, as part of the day's work.

The crews of the 'Bluenoses' brought to the wide sea their ancestors' love of melody and action, with the songs altered only but

little to fit the changed environment, and one may hear from them as they sent masts or yards aloft the song of 'Malbrouck' (Marlborough), with its stirring 'Mironton, Mironton, Mironton,' or the song of the stripped lark :

'Alouet-te gent elle  
Alouet-te, je te plumerai'

and the blood-aerating, tongue-rolling :

'En roulant, ma boule, roulant.'

No wonder that these ships could clothe themselves into towering peaks of snow-white canvas while yet other ships were mast-heading topsails only, a very usual sight in anchorage harbours in any part of the globe where the white-swan ships sailed a generation ago ; harbours that now echo only to the rattle of machinery.

The Shantyman always stood 'fore-hand' on a rope with the officer, while the crew tailed-on as it paralleled the deck, a line of men eighty feet long. All stood motionless in the solo part, and put in their full weight in a burst to the beat of the chorus, and something had to move, the timing was perfect, and the effort the maximum ; not an ounce was wasted.

The shanty made for the team spirit (nowhere more essential than on the deck, or aloft on the swaying yards, of a large *taunt* ship) ; it put new heart into men, brought a new set into weary shoulders, made men forget cold and privation, and smoothed away very many little irritations and bitternesses. Often a strained position has been saved by a song (and this not only at sea), and cunning officers have been known to make an 'all-hands-job' for this purpose in the ships where there was 'a job for every minute, and a song for every job.'

We now come to our own ships—the Lime-juicers, alas now no more than a legend and a name, and the shanties that were particularly British. Such were not without merit, nor less striking, or effective, than others, while in their range they were more varied. Some were marked by persiflage, often, perhaps, satire, but in the main they were topical or personal. In the first person the shantyman would relate hypothetical experiences on shore between voyages, a favourite theme, often dealt with in rabelaisian strain (sometimes not), and by the vigour of their choruses the crew indicated that their sentiments concurred with the song ; they might, indeed, even be listening to exploits of their own.

Our best hauling shanty was of this nature—‘Blow the man down.’

‘As I was a’strolling down Paradise Street,  
 “To my *way-ay*, *blow* the man down”;  
 A pretty young damsel I chanced for to meet,  
 “Oh *give* us some time to *blow* the man down””;

There are a hundred versions of this well-known shanty, most of them good, filling their purpose.

A capstan shanty embodying the same theme was the ‘Maid of Amsterdam,’ “mark well what I do say.”

‘In Amsterdam there dwelt a maid  
 “Mark well what I do say,”  
 In Amsterdam there dwelt a maid  
 And she was mistress of her trade; (the oldest)  
 “I’ll go no more a ro-o-ving with you, fair maid,”  
 ‘A’roving, a’roving, since roving killed my poor old dad”  
 “I’ll go no more a-ro-o-ving with you, fair maid.”’

While yet another such was ‘Sally Brown,’ who possessed a daughter of many charms, and what matter if the sentiment *was* laid on with a trowel? The end justified the means.

Perhaps the most popular capstan shanty was ‘Away for Rio,’ the tale of a milkmaid whose face was her fortune.

‘Then I cannot marry you, my pretty maid,  
 “Away, for Rio”;  
 Nobody axed you, kind sir, she said,  
 “And I’m bound to the Rio Grande””;

with the chorus, ‘Then fa-are you well, my bonny young gel, for I’m bound to the Rio Grande’; while another, and more stirring, shanty, not unknown on shore, was ‘Homeward bound.’

‘We’re homeward bound, I hear them say,  
 “Good-bye, fare you well. Good-bye, fare you well.”  
 We’re homeward bou-ound for Liverpool town,  
 “Hurrah, my boys, we’re homeward bound””;

which, because of its significance (it was never sung except upon the anchor being hove up for the last long passage of the voyage), was the most inspiring of all. The memory of this glorious shanty will live, for so long as life may last, in the hearts and minds of all who have ever walked around the capstan to its strains.

The Welsh seamen, tonic-solfa singers to a man, were our best shantymen, perhaps. Their 'Sh'an Vo-in Shan' (phonetic) was something worth listening to when twenty or thirty lusty tuneful voices joined-in in the chorus. The writer, a seaman, went out to Australia as a passenger in a sailing ship some thirty years ago with such a crew, and he often led their shanties. Heaving into dock on arrival at Port Adelaide, at five o'clock on a still bright evening as shops, offices, factories, and warehouses were closing for the day, the strains of 'Sh'an Vo-in Shan' brought twelve thousand people to surround the dock and fill its approaches, to enjoy the, to them, new experience—a breath of the wide sea the ship had so lately left. It may be remarked that the dock was surrounded by then-empty iron wool-and-wheat sheds, so the acoustics left nothing to be desired.

Upon another occasion, witnessed by the same person, in Hong Kong harbour, the shanty-singing on board a Yankee clipper, *El Capitan*, manned by twenty-eight Galveston negroes led by a big buck-nigger bosun eight inches over the fathom in length, and taking an altogether out-size in knuckle-dusters, stopped the entire harbour and water-front traffic for a full half-hour or more. A new main topmast, five tons in weight with its iron-gear, was being hoisted as the city haunts of men (even then prisons of steel and concrete) were commencing to fill, and Kowloon ferryboats and countless launches surrounded the ship from the first strains of the shanty ('Sally Brown,' an English one, out of deference to the port) until the 'fid' went home; and it is reasonable to believe that every one of the many thousands who were privileged to hear the sea epic (considerably toned down, of course) stepped about their hum-drum duties with a somewhat brisker step than usual that day.

Apropos of anything in the world but shanties, it may be related that, about a week after this event, the crew of this hell-ship, for *El Capitan* was all that, were not roused from their bunks before the first streak of dawn as usual, by a sling-shotted, knuckle-dustered bosun—his body, partially dismembered and with a knife still in the heart, buried to the hilt, was found in a slush-cask under the foc's'le-head right in the eyes of the ship, and the murderer was never found. Twenty-eight men hung together like one John Smith, and smilingly swore that the bosun 'must have met his death by accident.' Yet to men capable even of an act like this did the shanty appeal, for it to whisk them away for an hour from their brutal environment into a world of up-lift of their own making;

and always, in general, smooth the jolts of the way and make the going, if not wonderfully, then tolerably, pleasant.

The last shanty of the voyage, heaving into dock at the end of the last long trail, was always 'Leave her, Johnny, leave her.'

'For the times are hard, and the wages low,  
"Leave her, Johnny, leave her";  
Free men now, over the rail we go,  
"For it's time for us to leave her"';

in which, if the voyage had not been a happy one, the steam of it could be worked off with impunity, vengeance being defeated by the circumstances. Such, however, was of but rare occurrence, for the sailorman is a simple soul, not given to harbouring malice; the theme being, in general, anticipatory rather than retrospective in its character.

Now all heavy work on board ship, every ship, is done to the clankety rattle of steam winches, asthmatical oftener than not, but (granting all the lure and poetry (?) of applied mechanics) is it the same thing?—I ask you, gentlemen.

*Mauritius.*

## THE LARK TO HIS NEST.

BY NELL HANSON.

FATHER MURPHY was incurably romantic. Even twenty-five years of the confessional had not cured him of the notion that marriage ought to be begun, at least, in love; and nearly as many years in the parish of Kilbray had not taught him to look with complacency on the matrimonial bargaining that was a commonplace of life in the County Clare. It was therefore with much the same sense of outrage that he had known as a very young man, that he had listened to Pegeen O'Grady's request that afternoon.

'Was that Pegeen O'Grady?' his housekeeper asked, when she brought his tea.

The question seemed superfluous, since she had let the girl in herself.

She bustled round the room. 'They do be sayin' that herself an' Joe Hennessy would make the grand match, Father!'

Father Murphy glanced suspiciously at the keyhole. Only the night before last he had patiently filled it again with putty.

'The way their two farms does be lyin' side be side, ye'd say it was temptin' Providence, so ye would!' Miss Doyle's voice took on a rapt and dreamy tone. 'An' their two long fields runnin' together, like Siamese twins, up the side o' Boher Hill. Shure there couldn't be a betther match for her an' she an orphan wid no man to turn to at all, the crathur!'

'Would ye turn on the news please, Miss Doyle.'

If Pegeen had found a champion, then Father Murphy had no wish to show her more of his sense of outrage than the keyhole had already revealed.

'An' a dacent, clane-livin' young man—the sort would make anny woman happy for the rest of her life,' was her parting shot.

Father Murphy thought: 'Pegeen said that same thing. But shure there's no man livin' would make *anny* woman happy. What tom-fool nonsense women talk that aren't married themselves!'

Miss Doyle put her head round the door. 'I'm afther settin' the hall clock be the news, Father, the way ye'll not be late again for Mass,' she said severely; adding hurriedly: 'There's wan heart will be broke entirely if Pegeen brings it off, an' that's Maggie O'Reilly's o' the Post Office!'

Father Murphy concealed his surprise. '*Please, Miss Doyle!* They're just giving the latest from Budapest.'

She withdrew with the sniff that usually accompanied Kilbray comment on the O'Reilly family.

Father Murphy's mind wandered from Budapest. He seldom had reason to doubt the accuracy of Miss Doyle's information. Ah well! Maggie O'Reilly was young—younger than Pegeen; not more than seventeen, he thought. If it should prove a hopeless passion, she'd soon get over it. 'Isn't it like a daughter of O'Reilly's to be thinkin' herself a fit match for the richest man in the place,' he said to himself, with a hint of the Kilbray sniff. His Christian charity, almost all-embracing in middle life, had not been able to take in Tim O'Reilly, that pompous braggart from Limerick, who had taken over the Post Office shop a year ago. The son Patrick he frankly detested. He was one of Pegeen's most ardent suitors. For a moment the priest felt the human temptation to do as Pegeen asked and act as her ambassador to Joe Hennessy, if only to outmanœuvre the O'Reilly family. But he put it aside with a humorous twinkle. Wasn't he father in God to the O'Reillys as much as to Pegeen?

He finished his tea and went out into the warm June twilight. Deep in thought he found himself wandering in the direction of the O'Grady and Hennessy farms. At the turn of the lane that led to Pegeen's he stopped, and surveyed the long low house with its neat thatched roof. In there, not a year ago, Michael O'Grady had died. In there, on his death-bed, he had said to Pegeen those words she had repeated to-day with such conviction—the conviction of an adoring daughter. 'There's a power o' happiness in land, Pegeen,' he had said. 'I added to mine wid the bit your mother braht me.' And when Pegeen had asked: 'Did ye love her, Da?' he had said scornfully: 'Love! What's love? She was a fine shape of a woman, whatever took her when you were born, poor crathur! An' she was a good wife wid her cookin' an' mendin' an' churnin'. An' didn't she leave me me two new fields, an' you, Pegeen? What more could anny man be wantin'? But *love!* That's only copy-book trash, Pegeen!' So Pegeen, nineteen, lonely and lovely, and mistress of fourteen acres of well-stocked land, had come to ask Father Murphy if he would arrange a match with Joe Hennessy.

No one had ever made such a request of him. Pegeen had asked him because she had no relations nearer than Dublin. There

had been no maidenly shyness about her ; from which fact, even more than from her calm admission, he had deduced that she was heart-whole. He also discovered that although she had been besieged with attentions from nearly all the young men in Kilbray (‘ An’ why wouldn’t she be, even widout the land, wid her red hair an’ her apple-bloom face an’ her quiet, capable ways ? ’ the priest thought), yet Joe Hennessy had remained aloof. She seemed to think he was absorbed in the business of his farm ; and she admired that. Father Murphy divined that there was nothing of pique in Pegeen’s decision ; nor yet of that feminine perversity that longs for the elusive and the unobtainable. She merely wished to marry land—as much land as she could.

He had done his utmost to dissuade her, talking gently of love and the Holy Sacrament of Marriage. But he had been helpless before the urgency of her father’s dying advice. She had only said stubbornly : ‘ I’ll have to thry some other way, so.’

A lark rose from his nest in the centre of Pegeen’s long field, and beat up into the air with eager, rapturous song. Father Murphy could see the tiny speck against the primrose sky. His eye dropped down to Pegeen’s and Joe’s twin fields ; and thinking of Miss Doyle and her ‘ they do be sayin’, ’ he realised the futility of his refusal. There was hardly a man or a woman in Kilbray who wouldn’t be more than willing to take a hand in making the match. A sudden thought came to him. ‘ Manny’s the grand match has been spoiled by a clumsy, tactless go-between ! I’ll manage this one meself, so I will ; an’ maybe save the child, in spite of herself ! ’ Relieved by this light on his path, he chuckled softly.

The lark’s song grew louder, more rapturous ; and was suddenly stilled as he dropped and found his nest. ‘ That’s the way it ought to be ! ’ Father Murphy thought.

He went straight up to the farmhouse and told Pegeen he had changed his mind.

Her clear grey eyes looked gravely into his, without a shadow of self-distrust, as she thanked him. When he was leaving she said thoughtfully : ‘ Maybe it’s because ye’re not married yerself, like my Da, that ye set such store by this “love”—an’ beggin’ yer pardon, Father ! ’

Which innocently-uttered thrust left Father Murphy without retort.

He went next day to see Joe Hennessy. Joe had been only about nine months in Kilbray, having come from Kerry to take



over the farm on the death of an uncle ; but he and the priest already liked and respected one another.

After inspecting the latest arrival in his cowshed, Father Murphy plunged with unsubtle brusqueness. 'What would ye think o' makin' a match wid Pegeen O'Grady, Joe ? I hear she'd be likely to consider the proposition favourably.'

Joe's blue eyes, sharp and direct, searched his face. He was plainly startled. 'Is it Pegeen herself got ye to ask me that, yer riverence ?' he asked bluntly.

Father Murphy hesitated, measuring his man. His own horror at such avariciousness in so young a girl had been strongly tempered by his knowledge of her father's advice and her blind acceptance of it. Was it worth while humiliating little Pegeen by telling Joe the bald truth, without such mitigating explanation ? How much would it disgust a man brought up amidst matrimonial bargaining ? He was very fond of Pegeen and hated to do it. Would it really achieve the end he so ardently desired ? Individual reactions were difficult to forecast. But remembering Joe's generosity with money, of which he had had ample evidence, and a certain other-worldly simplicity which beamed from the big man's broad and pleasant face, he decided to try untempered truth.

'It was,' he said. 'An' what more natural, Joe, wid yer two prosperous farms lyin' cheek by jowl ?'

Joe flung down a bundle of straw and stalked out of the cowshed. From the doorway the priest watched him stamping up and down the yard. His face was dark with anger.

'Look-at here, Father !' he said. 'Ye can tell that designin' young woman that when Joe Hennessy's ready to marry he'll look for the woman that's wantin' himself, an' not his farm-land !'

Driven by instinctive chivalry, Father Murphy retreated from an unpleasantly-won position. 'She's no more designin' than you or me, Joe. She's been brought up that way, like manny another. Her father preached "marry land, Pegeen," even on his death-bed itself. An' she worshipped him, Joe !'

Joe's face cleared a little ; but his mouth still curled as he said : 'Bitten wid the bug of her ancestors, is it ? Well, I'm sorry for her ! But ye can tell her all the same that Joe Hennessy will be wantin' a wife for himself an' not for his cows an' pigs !'

Chivalry still at war with his careful scheming, Father Murphy said : 'She's one o' the loveliest girls in the County Clare, Joe, an' one o' the sweetest, for all she's so set on a match. Ye'll maybe go farther an' fare much worse !'

‘Och Father, there’s no use talkin’!’ Joe turned the conversation back to fat-cattle prices.

Father Murphy carefully reported the entire conversation to Pegeen; and was somewhat painfully rewarded by her ingenuous humiliation.

‘What’ll he think o’ me at all, Father!’ she moaned, rocking herself to and fro in the unforeseen and agonising grip of girlish modesty.

‘He’ll think nothin’ at all, Pegeen. Shure there’s hardly a girl in the place wouldn’t have done the same in your shoes. Though more’s the pity, *I* say! I’ll be glad if you’ve learned young, Pegeen, an’ maybe saved yerself a lifetime o’ misery, child.’

‘I’ll never hold me head up again,’ she said miserably.

‘Nonsense, child! Take a hold on yerself! Ye offered him a good bargain—the best there is in Kilbray, I’ll say, that’s known ye from a baby. But I’m thankful to God he didn’t accept it.’

Slightly comforted, able to laugh at herself a little through her tears, Pegeen went home.

Her immediate visible reaction was a marked flirtation with Patrick O’Reilly, which caused Father Murphy to smile to himself. ‘She’s got more sense than to marry a young ass the like o’ him; an’ a jilting will do him good!’ he thought with some satisfaction.

But about young Maggie O’Reilly he began to feel concern. Watching her face at Mass, he saw it grow pale and pinched; and a restlessness grew on her. Even without her halting confessions, he’d have guessed she was sick with love. But Joe Hennessy whistled about his farm, plainly heart-whole and care-free.

And then Pegeen caught the sickness. Father Murphy went to see her one afternoon about the middle of August. He saw she had been crying. She welcomed him brightly, pretending nothing was wrong; but as they talked, he saw her eyes fill again with tears.

‘What’s wrong, my child?’ he asked, thinking grief for her father still troubled her.

The kindly words broke down her thin defences. She began to cry with a quiet despair that frightened him. It was so unlike the wild, childish sorrow he had seen at her father’s death.

‘Can’t ye tell me, Pegeen?’ he urged.

‘It’s Joe Hennessy, Father!’ she whispered.

‘Has that fellow been rude to you, Pegeen? I’ll break his head for him!’ Father Murphy meant it. He had a great regard for Pegeen.

'He has not; indeed he has not. But ye'll think such shame of me, Father!' She began to sob again.

Father Murphy's thought leaped anxiously. There were strange things now, between boys and girls, since the days of the War and the Trouble; and not all of them were confessed either, he knew to his grief. But the grey eyes raised to his were frank and trustful. 'I'm afther fallin' in love wid him!' she said.

Father Murphy laughed his relief, then wished he hadn't, as Pegeen flushed and covered her face.

'An' me afther sendin' him that dreadful message, Father!' she moaned. "'Designin' woman" he said I was. He'll never spake to me again as long as I live. He never does now, only to say "it's a fine day," an' he passin'.'

Remembering Joe's anger, the priest had a private fear that she was right. But she needed comfort now. 'That's not to say he never will,' he said. But the tears flowed drearily down her cheeks. He diagnosed that to talk of Joe would be her best comfort. 'How did ye come to fall in love?' he asked.

She didn't know. It had come on her suddenly. Sometimes she'd heard his men talking and telling what a kindly master he was. Sometimes she'd heard him with them, laughing and joking in the fields. Now and then she'd come face to face with him, unavoidably; and had held her head high, pretending she didn't care what he thought. 'An' it's God's truth, Father, it was only anger an' bitterness I felt. An' then one day—about the end o' July it was—I was standin' in me own long field, an' he an' his men were workin' beyond on a field o' late hay. The smell o' the clover was liftin' up all about me, Father, an' a lark was high in the sky an' singin' fit to burst himself; an' I could see his tall back risin' an' bendin', tossin' the hay. An' . . . an' . . . I don't know how it came on me, Father. But you'll not understand, of course!' She stopped, embarrassed.

Father Murphy smiled, as one who apologises for a disability.

'An' ever since that afternoon it's been wid me, night an' day. The queer joy, Father, that turns yer insides weak on you; an' the cruel tormentin' pain; an' the shame, Father—the terrible, terrible shame that I can't forget.' She began to cry again.

'Keep yerself busy, Pegeen. There's no other cure. An' remember, there's a power o' help in the Sacraments, child. I know what I'm talkin' about. You'll get over it. Ye're young yet.'

But his heart misgave him as the weeks wore on ; for he saw pain deepening in her eyes.

It was in mid-September that Flannigan's Circus came to Kilbray, hoping to snatch some custom from the straggling remnant of summer visitors. Its advent brought fresh worry to the priest ; for several times he came on Maggie O'Reilly with young Flannigan—a shifty, loose-mouthed fellow whose looks he did not like. And there was a reckless gleam in Maggie's unhappy eyes that he liked no better. But she only tossed her head and laughed when he said : ' I don't like that fellow.'

It was that accurately-tuned receiving-set, Miss Doyle, who brought the news. ' Flannigan's is afther packin' up to-day ; an' would ye believe it, Father, Maggie O'Reilly's gone wid them to Cork ! I always knew that one was a shameless hussy !' She sniffed the Doyle sniff, with emphasis.

' Remember your Christian charity, Miss Doyle.'

' Indeed, if it's to stretch to the O'Reillys it'll be needin' a seam or two let out !' she said. ' Tim O'Reilly is afther swearin' he'll see her dead before he sees her inside his door again ; an' Patrick's ragin' mad, so he is. People that lives in glass houses, sez I . . .'

But Father Murphy was intent on tuning in to Queen's Hall.

Nevertheless, he was seriously disturbed. He wrote twice to Flannigan's Circus, but got no reply. Curiously, in spite of animosity towards the boastful Tim, Kilbray upheld his determination to cast his daughter off. Father Murphy suspected that Kilbray knew that the greater its scandalisation, the deeper would be Tim's humiliation. The O'Reillys, father and son, were drinking that bitter draught ; for Pegeen, lost in her love and pain, had grown tired of Patrick's attentions. Tired, too, of the amorous, importunate youths of Kilbray and their businesslike parents. A muttering crept through the village. Father Murphy heard it here and there. ' Lord save us ! But isn't she the stuck-up grandee !' But Pegeen ploughed her fields and sowed her autumn wheat in a still grief that neither saw nor cared what Kilbray felt.

Pity drove the priest to try another round with Joe. He led the talk to Pegeen, with subtlety. ' Would ye never think of her, Joe ? The boys are all daft about her, an' small blame to them.'

Joe turned sour at once. ' I'm sick to me soul of women, Father. There's this one an' that one is sayin' it's me got Maggie O'Reilly into throuble. Blast the girl ! I never so much as cocked an eye at her, an' that's God's truth ! An' as to that young Pegeen

—if I marry, I'll marry a heart. A *heart*, d'ye hear; an' not an addin' machine!'

'She's got a heart right enough.' Father Murphy checked a sigh and changed the subject.

And autumn passed to winter, and December came. And with December came Maggie O'Reilly. She blew in jauntily one afternoon, her scarlet beret cocked at the latest angle. Father Murphy met her coming down the station road. She greeted him as if she'd been no farther than the next parish. Her eyes were clear and bright again, and her young cheeks softly rounded.

The priest thought anxiously of O'Reilly's smouldering wrath. 'I'll come home wid ye, Maggie,' he said. 'I'm steppin' that way meself.'

'Is he . . . angry, Father?' she asked, fear suddenly in her eyes.

'He is that, Maggie,' he said.

Tim bellowed and swore at her. 'By God, ye'll not disgrace an O'Reilly an' come trapsin' home expectin' to be made welcome! I'll not have anny bawdy girl callin' me "father," so help me God!'

Maggie said nothing; just stood before him, white and bewildered.

Father Murphy laid a hand on her arm. 'Come home wid me, my child, an' we'll see what we can do.'

To his surprise, he found Pegeen with Miss Doyle in the kitchen. 'I thought maybe I'd take her home, the crathur,' she said. 'I'm afther seem' the both of you goin' up to O'Reilly's, an' I knew the way it would be.'

'That's like your good kind heart, Pegeen,' he said.

So Pegeen took Maggie O'Reilly home; and Father Murphy sat down to a troubled tea. There wasn't much sign of penitence about the girl.

The muttering grew in Kilbray against Pegeen and Maggie. It was the discomfited Patrick who brought it to a climax.

Going into the 'Commercial Hotel' a couple of mornings later, Father Murphy almost bumped into Patrick, lurching out with some other young men. 'It's early to be in that state, O'Reilly,' the priest observed.

'We're afther celebratin' the return o' the she-prodigal, yer riverence!' one lad said, with a broad wink at Patrick. Patrick reddened sullenly.

As he drank his morning glass in the bar parlour, Father Murphy could hear them talking and swearing outside. Presently he heard a woman's startled cry. He went quickly to the window. In the

centre of the group stood Pegeen. Two of the lads were holding her by the arms and Patrick was addressing her in thick, angry tones. 'We'll see ye give up that sister o' mine, that *was* ! Be all the holy saints, what right have ye to be harbouring the vile disgrace o' Kilbray ?'

Father Murphy had started for the door when Pegeen's voice, calm and fearless, arrested him. 'I'll not give her up, Patrick O'Reilly, for you or the whole pack o' boys in Kilbray !'

There was an angry roar and someone called Maggie a dirty name.

But Pegeen's voice went on, still unafraid and charged with passionate anger. 'How dare ye, ye dirty low cowards !'

The knot was already growing to a whispering crowd. On the edge of it Father Murphy spied Joe Hennessy's tall figure ; and the sight kept him rooted where he was, with a sense that the Fates were working.

'She's as pure an' sweet as the day she left Kilbray.' Pegeen raised her head defiantly, looking round the muttering crowd. 'She loved a man that wouldn't look at her at all ; an' she took a job wid the circus an' ran away because . . . because . . .' Her clear voice halted ; and Father Murphy knew she had seen Joe Hennessy. In a moment she had recovered. 'Because she was that heart-broke, poor child. Since when is lovin' a man a crime in Kilbray, I ask ye ? She's afther comin' home because that young Flannigan was pestherin' the life out of her. I'm keepin' her till I can send her to me antie in Dublin. An' I'll thank you, me brave boy-ohs, to let me pass an' go to me home !'

The crowd drew back a little, abashed, except the half-drunken knot about Pegeen. Father Murphy thought it was time to intervene. But at the door, he saw Joe Hennessy elbowing through the crowd.

'Let me pass, blast ye, ye lousy blaggards !' he cried. 'Is there no one in Kilbray has got a heart at all, exceptin' Pegeen !'

A blow sent Patrick O'Reilly grovelling on the ground. He seized Pegeen by the arm. A lane seemed to open before them as it might for a queen or a leper, and down it he marched with her, glaring to right and left.

'I hope ye're mortal ashamed o' yerselves. God knows ye ought to be,' Father Murphy said coldly. And the mortified, scurrying crowd appeared to acknowledge that he was right.

Kilbray would have been amazed had it seen his smile as he sauntered home. He was thinking of a warm evening in June ; and a lark dropping swiftly to his nest.

## THE DUGONG-HUNTERS.

BY C. C. VYVYAN.

THE cruise took place a few miles north of the Tropic of Capricorn, among those many islands that lie off the coast of Queensland within the shelter of the Barrier Reef, forming, together with that Reef, protection for the mainland from the storms of the Pacific.

Indirectly the hero of the cruise, for he it was who found and commandeered Barcoo, was Willie the black-boy, generally known as 'Old Willie,' tribally known as Willie Maggomboolloo.

On that day when the dugong-hunt was first mooted, Willie was nowhere to be found. He was not working with the men, for the cattle had been mustered early in the morning, collected in the stock-yard, driven through the arsenic bath and then turned out again. It was certain that he had not gone to the creek after *wambine* (crab), for there below the house in the paddock was his own particular horse, 'Little Fella Pony,' and Willie never walked where he could ride. Nor was he collecting fowls' eggs from about the house and garden, for he had already performed this daily ritual, appearing after the midday meal on the front verandah, quiet as a shadow, looking slyly round the corner for the Boss's wife, holding both hands behind his back as he grasped a scarlet cotton handkerchief.

'Well, Willie, how many eggs to-day?'

That was always the opening gambit.

'Wahngye colpeur,' was the unvarying reply in his normal falsetto voice, while he displayed the whites of his eyes, rolling them in tragi-comic fashion.

'Oh, Willie! only one egg?'

That, in a tone of disappointment and reproof, was the next move. Each performer was word-perfect.

The epilogue, always delivered by Old Willie, was nothing more than a gurgling chuckle that sounded like water shaken in a bottle, or like a gnome expressing mirth and malice, and it was always accompanied by a gesture that displayed the cotton handkerchief burstingly full of eggs.

Nor, on this particular occasion, was he to be found on the back

verandah, where often at odd moments one might discover him teaching his own language to the Boss's daughter. That was a slow education for her, because he could only give her words for whatever he could touch or see beneath the sun or in the heavens. Pointing with the finger was the only bridge from white mentality to black and from black to white; there could be no subtle interplay of questions duly answered or statements duly weighed. This method of teaching was direct, laconic, final; or perhaps the grammarian, devotee of niceties, would have called it broad, clumsy and unfinished. Nearly every verb in Willie's vocabulary was linked to the overworked monosyllable 'bin.' 'I bin think it *callay* come up bime-hy,' he would say. ('I think it is going to rain.') Or: 'Me bin lose im that.' ('I forget.') Every word and turn of phrase, except the nouns for concrete objects, were of course acquired by direct mimicry on the part of the pupil. No explanations could ever be given by the master, but he would express mirth or regret by two shrill exclamations: 'Don't make it me laugh!' and 'Don't make it me cry!'

Very strange, and some of them beautiful as well as strange, were the native names for natural phenomena. *Karka* (moon): *Candallay* (star): *Carrayn* (sun): *Rana* (sea): *Pulirri* (sky): *Nornou* (cloud). Repetition of names for human features would always involve gesticulations, tapping teeth, patting stomach, slapping back, standing on one leg, always in the same sequence like letters of the alphabet, thus: *Mel* (eye), *Woorroo* (nose), *Irta* (tooth), *Yelli* (hair), *Pinna* (foot), *Tarriyah* (leg), *Nelli* (hand), *Boolloo* (stomach), *Oongal* (back), *Karkurri* (knee). The word for 'hot' (*karemarl*) was always uttered with a languid air and an upward glance to the sun, and the word for 'cold' (*koomberi*) was emphasised by a fit of shivers, for Willie was a born mimic. There is no doubt that his preoccupation with the concrete had sharpened every physical sense. He would spot a *tookurri* (carpet-snake) or a *walmal* (native-bear) where a white man saw only branch and leaves, he had beautiful hands on a horse, and his hearing was acute; often the music from beating wings of the *kayaboolloo* (swan) would reach him when the white man stood in a world of silence. Only perhaps his sense of taste was coarser than ours, no doubt as a result of environment and necessity. He and his fellows could eat the flesh of the *maroon* (goanna), while in the white man's opinion the body of this carrion-eating tree-lizard was only fit to be melted down into oil for cleaning guns.



On this day of the dugong-hunting project Old Willie was at last discovered in his bedroom, which was also the harness shed, lying in a corner, fully clothed in striped tiger-coloured jersey, dungaree trousers, elastic-sided boots and felt hat, smoking a pipe. His black face looked out from that dim lair like the head of some wary old toad and, as he lay there smoking, the only high lights in the picture were the whites of his eyes and a string of mother-of-pearl shell fragments, each one cut into the oblong shape of an African shield, threaded round his hat as a charm against evil.

Willie was duly lured out from this den and questioned about his knowledge of the dugong-grounds and of the tides and islands that would have to be negotiated by the little sailing-boat in its voyage, but he either could not or would not give any precise information, only repeating again and again : ' Plenty fella *barraballa* (dugong) Waroon Island, me no catch um *barraballa*, me fresh-water Willie, Barcoo bin catch um *barraballa*, Barcoo salt-water Willie ' ; and he pointed to the south. Nothing more could be elicited about Barcoo, and who and where Barcoo might be ; whether he were a living native accustomed to hunting the sea-mammal, or a legendary figure of the past, neither Dick Silver (the Boss) nor his friend could ascertain. However, since Willie was a handy fellow and also a tolerable cook, that is to say cognisant of the arts of making flap-jack and of frying fish, they decided to take him on the trip, and the Boss stimulated his enthusiasm by promising him ten shillings if the party killed a dugong.

The Silver family were well aware that Willie, for all his primitive mentality, had learnt the value of the white man's money. Once the whole Silver family went to stay for three days with the Nortons on a neighbouring station a hundred miles away, taking Willie with them as outrider. When they were loading the two buggies at the end of the visit prior to departure, having sent Willie on to open the first gate, Mrs. Silver said to their hostess : ' I hope Willie thanked you properly for all your kindness to him during our visit ? ' ' On the contrary,' said Mrs. Norton, ' I have just said good-bye to him and given him a shilling, and he only put up his thumb and forefinger at me and screamed, " Two fella shilling ! " '

The locality in which the dugong-hunters proposed to search for their prey was a certain bay within the shelter of the Great Barrier Reef, between the mainland and a peninsula that pointed north. This bay included an area of three to four hundred square miles and was, in the northern part, some fifteen fathoms deep ; it was full of

rocks and islands, shoals and sand-bars, with a tide of twenty-two feet that came thundering and foaming in from the Pacific at the rate of five or six knots an hour. In the southern part of the bay there were unnumbered sand-bars and sand-banks and the shores were lined with mangrove swamps, some of these impenetrable and four or five miles in breadth. The dull olive-green of these weird trees, like the sad blue-grey of the gum-trees and the sapless yellow of the grass, would rouse in any Englishman homesickness for one patch of real green in plain or forest.

At the time when these three men set out on their cruise, the charts were by no means accurate, for the marine surveyors had not found it worth while to pay much attention to such an unfrequented region. Three or four times a year perhaps a fifteen-ton coasting vessel would sail across those waters bringing provisions to some cattle-station, but there was no other ocean traffic.

Dick Silver, a thick-set man of few words and unceasing activity, was manager and also owner of a fifty-thousand-acre cattle-station on that peninsula. His friend, from the nearest town, which lay a hundred and twenty miles to the south, was not at that period old, but he was never known by any other name than that of 'Old Man Lobb.' In the town where he conducted an insurance business he was like an exiled king or a fish out of water, but on any camping expedition he was a monarch secure of his own dominion, for although there was nothing kingly about the appearance of this unkempt lanky man with goat beard and sagging trousers and a mellow felt hat and the black cotton shirt that he always donned for holidays, he had that love of all wild elements which is the inheritance of earth's true king, the gipsy.

The boat in which the three sailed was about a ton and a half, open except for a small cabin in the bows, where they stored their blankets and provisions; she had a centre-board and was lightly built, she could be moved about on rollers or run on to the beach almost anywhere, but at the same time she was able to stand a good sea.

Both Dick Silver and Old Man Lobb had learned much about the dugong from two great teachers of the bookless bushman, hearsay and tradition, but neither of them had ever seen one of those strange mammals, nor did they know exactly where to find their feeding-ground. Much they had been told about their habits and their habitat, how they frequented shallow waters, feeding on the short green weed, called dugong-weed, that grew on the mud-banks which were uncovered at low tide; how with the rising tide they

would come up to browse upon these banks like cattle coming to their pasture ; and how the mud would stretch for miles and miles, being sometimes three to five feet deep. The animals might be so much as twelve feet long, weighing up to twenty hundredweight ; they were gregarious, of a dark-brown colour, the skin, which was fully three-quarters of an inch thick, being covered with long bristles ; their teeth were large, of fine ivory, their skin was used in making belts for machinery, their oil was valuable, their flesh excellent when eaten fresh or when cured like bacon. The females were most faithful mothers, and seldom would one desert a captured calf. In olden days the aborigines would spear dugong from their bark-and-fibre canoes, using spears whose points were made of bone or wood, but latterly they had begun to use fencing wire sharpened to a fine point. These spears, attached to a line and thrown with considerable force, would easily enter the soft dugong hide, and then would bend under the strain, holding well without a barb. The animal would be played for some time, then hauled up to the canoe and given an ' easy death ' by suffocation, this being effected by plugging the small nostrils with wooden pegs. On this particular cruise the dugong-hunters were provided with a light harpoon gun fitted with a harpoon of soft tough steel and a hundred and fifty yards of line.

The day they set out there was a fresh breeze, and across several miles of tossing brown water and shifting sand they could see a yellow-green line where mangrove swamps skirted the base of mountain ranges. All day those ranges were changing colour, from misty grey to clear green and then in the evening light to cobalt blue ; only two bare patches on their lower slopes remained an unchanging colour, a foxy red. These were known as the Bald Hills, and above them towered a double-crested peak locally known as Double Mountain. Old Willie kept his eye all day on these Bald Hills, sometimes pointing towards them and repeating the word ' Barcoo,' but for the most part he sat crouched in the bows, looking out over the water in silence.

The waste of sand and water, too, was always changing colour. Sometimes it held the blue of the Mediterranean, and in such moments the sand-banks and sand-bars were like golden wedges ; sometimes it lay in silver streaks catching the sunlight ; and then again there would be only the tossing brown waste of waters under a fresh breeze and a cloudy sky. Away to the north a great sand-bank, prolonging the line of mangrove swamp after that line had

touched the water, seemed by an optical delusion to bar the entrance of the sea into the sound. Southward was a patch of emerald green, an island full of scrub and ti-trees, where the snow-white egrets had their nesting-place. On the mud-banks there were flocks of Burdekin duck and innumerable crabs; wherever a sand-bank was exposed there would be great wise pelicans resting for a while as they awaited the incoming tide that would bring them their daily food, the small fishes that thronged the banks. There were, of course, no towns nor villages round the desolate shores of the bay, which were given over to grazing cattle or sheep. For those three in their small boat the nearly land-locked bay was a happy cruising-ground, for seldom would a big sea get up, and moreover there were many places offering anchorage and shelter.

That first day was uneventful except for the spearing of a large, turtle, which was lost because the barbed turtle-peg came out. They anchored in the horse-shoe bay of a little island, surrounded on three sides by scrub; pitching camp entailed only spreading out their blankets, lighting a fire and putting their food and utensils within easy reach. Willie at once dug out of the sand a few white crabs, took off the legs which he reserved as ground-bait, pounded up the remainder, shell and all, into a paste which he tied to his hook with thread, and then set off to a reef of rocks to catch Blue-fish. The two white men wandered off with a gun to inspect the island.

It was waterless, some three miles long by one and a quarter wide, with fine sandy beaches and a fringing belt of scrub all round the shore, this belt, some fifty yards wide, being full of wild fig- and plum-trees and many birds, quail and doves and pigeons and the mound-building scrub-turkey. Curlews, sand-pipers and oyster-catchers frequented the shores, and there were tracks of rabbits all about the island. The grass was bone dry and high as a man's waist, and in the customary fashion they set fire to it as they walked in order to clear the ground of snakes. On this occasion the fire was also a signal to a neighbouring station-owner who hoped to join them on the morrow; his station was five miles away, lying round the base of a well-known land-mark, a pine-covered mountain 1,200 feet in height. Their total bag was an oyster-catcher and two small doves. Later, when Willie's Blue-fish had been thrown on the hot embers and consumed and the birds were providing a second course, the answering signal came from the mountain, two fires, which meant, 'I cannot come.'

Next day they sailed towards the mainland, searching every mud-bank for dugong, but there was very little weed floating in the water and never a sign of the mammals. All day Willie kept silence, only pointing south-west at intervals and repeating, 'Bar-coo.' They returned that night to the same anchorage and sailed next morning towards the Ten Mile Creek that ran inland under the Bald Hills. The entrance to this inlet was hard to find for it lay in the very middle of a coast-line where, in mile after mile of mangrove swamp, the bends and bays were all exactly like each other. With a very light head-wind they took all day to sail about seventeen miles and late in the afternoon, when the entrance had not appeared, Silver suggested a return to the nearest sandy beach, not liking the idea of spending the night upon a mud-bank where they could not land nor light a fire, and where any wind that rose would find them out. Old Man Lobb was all for holding on another hour, and while they were debating the question Willie declared that he saw the entrance ahead. It was merely another bend in the mangrove swamp, exactly like a dozen that they had already passed, no opening was visible, but Willie rolled his eyes and pointed inland with such conviction that they gambled on the native's intuition and ran in some way towards the shore, until they suddenly saw an opening between those unfriendly mangrove-trees.

They rowed in with the rising tide for about a mile and came to a landing-place, a bank of stiff mud surmounted by a corrugated-iron hut for sheltering goods; this was an unloading station for stuff that came by sea to the manager, whose head station was ten miles inland. Looking at the coast one would never credit the existence of such a creek with such a depth of water, but looking inland towards that mountain range dominated by a peak of 2,400 feet, one could understand how the tropical rain rushing down its slopes had gathered impetus enough to cut out the deep narrow channel in that stiff mud.

No sooner had they anchored in a cloud of sand-flies than Willie, pointing towards the mountain range and muttering, 'Me bin fetch um Barcoo,' disappeared up the buggy track that ended beside that iron shed.

In the twenty-four hours that those two spent awaiting his return, they had ample time to observe the alligator tracks about them; that creek was a favourite resort of the monsters that in winter lie upon the mud-banks basking in the sun but in summer are seldom seen in day-time. Here and there where the channel took

a bend would be a sloping mud-bank and in one such place they saw quite close together the tracks of eight alligators that had apparently crawled up the bank and gone into the mangroves, some of the feet-marks being very large and far apart. They went down next day on the tide and anchored for a while at the mouth of the creek, watching with astonishment the vast expanse of mud-banks gradually appearing as the tide ebbed. On a sand-bank some way off was a pelican asleep, looking like a large white boat. They landed here and there on a bank and crawled cautiously about, but only where they found a patch of hard dry sand, for anywhere else they would have sunk at once into mud or quaking sand.

Then they sailed out to sea in hopes of seeing dugong, but the day was squally and it is hard to detect them in rough water, so they ran for the creek again, on their way striking a bank and actually ploughing a furrow with their keel through the soft mud. There was no danger, for the tide was rising and there were no rocks in that part of the sound, but the sensation, several times repeated, was a peculiar one. At intervals deep channels or gutters extended across the bank, all in the same direction, so that for a few seconds they would run unimpeded before a favouring breeze, then feel a sudden check as way was taken off by the mud and then again speed freely and then once more be stopped. They anchored a little way up the creek to explore a place where the natives used to camp when fishing. Two narrow ridges where gum-trees grew, surrounded by mangrove swamps, ran right to the creek on either side. They landed on both banks to explore, for to camp there would save them sweeping for three-quarters of a mile up to the tin hut. Both ridges were dry and sandy, but one had a passage cut to it through the mangrove roots; evidently the blacks used to run their canoes through this passage to the sand. As the two men stood looking down on this deserted camp, on remnants of dugong, of *gungahs* (primitive frameworks of sticks for making blanket tents) and of an old bark canoe, they were suddenly aware of some human presence.

Never a voice had they heard nor any sound of footfall, but there before them in the clearing stood Old Willie and another black-boy. Willie pointed to his mate. 'Barcoo bin catch um *plenty* fella dugong,' he said, his voice rising to a high pitch for emphasis on the word 'plenty,' and as he rolled his eyes the pupils nearly disappeared over the edge of the whites.

Barcoo stood there in silence. He was a merry-looking fellow,

not big, but strong and well shaped, younger than Willie, possessing more English, with an alert inquisitive expression. Little by little they learnt his history. He had been brought up from a boy on cattle-stations; he used to rob huts at one time, and then he was not allowed near stations for a long spell, during which he went off on fishing trips among the islands with some of his tribe. Now he was become a 'good-fella-boy.' He had first-hand knowledge of the coast and islands, of where good camps and water might be found and of where the dugong-grounds would be. He had, moreover, a rich repertoire of native chants, in tone resembling Gregorians, and evening after evening he would hold *corroborree* with Willie, repeating again and again crude and simple tales, one could hardly call them songs, about kangaroos and fish and snakes and native life.

All this transpired later, of course. At that moment, when the two natives appeared thus noiselessly from the heart of the mangrove swamp, there was nothing for it but to accept Barcoo from Willie's hands as a talisman and to take him along.

A threat of rain and fear of the alligators led them to row up the creek and camp that night with the iron roof overhead. Next day, Barcoo being now regarded as unofficial pilot, they beat over to the other side of the bay, making for an island some eighteen miles off that lay close to the peninsula and was the first link in that chain of rocks and shoals which extends across the bay from east to west. Together with a neighbouring island it had been taken up by a squatter and stocked with sheep; it was well watered, about fifty square miles in extent, and as a rule two stockmen were camped there. Between this island and the land was a passage, two miles in the broadest part and half a mile in the narrowest; it was known as 'Strong Tide Passage' and was marked dangerous on the chart, for a five-knot tide ran backwards and forwards through it unceasingly. Through this passage a great volume of the waters of the bay escaped into the ocean, and through it the ocean tide hurried in to fill the vacuum of the bay. At the ocean end, on opposite sides of the passage, were two rocky reefs with only a quarter of a mile of deep water between them at low tide, and here the tide ran like a mill-race, making everlasting music against the rocks, like the music of the Merry Men. When the water was running out and there was any wind blowing there would be a tremendous tide-rip.

They entered this passage just as the tide began to rise against

them, but the breeze was strong enough to carry them slowly on. The sky to south-west was blue-black and the four men watched it anxiously, until the thunder-storm rolled up and fierce squalls and heavy rain fell on them. They lowered the peak, took in a reef and headed for the shelter of the land, but half an hour later the storm was over and they began to beat up the passage once again.,

Barcoo had described a little bay on the sheep-run island where anchorage was good, and they were now within half a mile of this place, but as they neared the narrow end of the passage the tide grew stronger and in spite of a favouring wind they began to go astern. It was now dusk and there was nothing for it but to run into a little cove and beach the boat among the mangroves. A ghostly spot that was by all tradition, and a squally night served to heighten the dismal atmosphere of the place. Barcoo knew every detail of the story; how a few years ago the blacks had committed a murder on that very spot, how a well-known police inspector had landed to 'disperse' the natives (such was the customary phrase for that particular form of legal retribution) and how some few skulls remained to attest the success of that 'dispersal.'

Barcoo and Willie fixed a *gungah* with a tarpaulin roof for the white men; then they retired into their own *gungah*, and far into the night their shrill and nasal-toned *corroborree* resounded in that dismal place. It sounded something like this:

'Ad im Birri.  
Pan Gim Birri.  
Ad im Birri.  
Pan Gim Birri.  
Kikiago.  
Kikiago.  
Kanaka Corroborree.  
Kee-iva.'

The last words apparently bore some reference to Willie's own country, the timbered leagues below Pine Mountain. No doubt the fear and dismal imaginings bred in the darkness of that swamp induced homesickness, and then again thoughts of home and chants of home would armour his untutored mind against the terrors of the unseen world.

In the morning the boat would not float at high tide, the night tides being higher than those of the day, but twenty-four hours later, on a windless morning, they got out the sweeps and pulled away from that cove into the current which swept them swiftly



round a rocky bluff to within half a mile of the ocean entrance ; then, by hard rowing, they got out of this tide current and came into the still water of a little bay beside which the two stockmen had fixed their camp. Presumably they had gone over to the mainland for stores, for the camp was at that moment deserted.

The four hunters spent a happy day on the island, the white men fishing and the natives spearing sharks. Old Man Lobb, seated on a rock with the jagged knife-like ridges all about him, his boots in rags, his clothes sagging and mellowed by wear and weather, had the appearance of a piece of seaweed left there by the tide, but he was keenly aware of everything on his horizon, from the beauty of the weeds that swayed in clear water at his feet, to the contrasting colours where black rocks rose from a turquoise sea, where emerald-green scrub fringed a beach of golden sand. Also he knew his job and brought back for supper five sea-bream and a Blue-fish (Parrot-fish) that weighed seven pounds.

Twenty-four hours later they had to sweep out of the passage into the great bay again, and then, under Barcoo's direction, they made for an islet of the Cannibal group, some twelve miles away. Passing a great sand-bank covered with sea-birds, they ran to within two miles of the island, and then once more the dugong-ground seemed to vanish into the realm of things sought and sought in vain, for they came to a strange pinnacle rock, square as if cut by human hand, rising thirty feet straight from the water, set among shoals and rock islets, and there the wind suddenly failed them ; they were left at the mercy of the tide in the midst of those rocks and reefs against which the tide roared and foamed.

It was calm, with only a slight ground-swell from the north, and with the light wind they headed this way and that, but it was no use, the tide running out of the bay carried them farther and farther towards the open sea and a group of islets that lie in the track of ocean-going steamers. They tried the sweeps in vain ; they tried to anchor, but the anchor chain did not touch bottom. At last they came to a small rock under which was a stretch of slack water ; they dropped the useless sail and pulled towards that rock, reaching its shelter after a hard struggle. Here, as they looked down into the clear water at the forest of strange coral-growths, at huge boulders and masses of swaying seaweed and fish darting about, Barcoo related to them another epic of the past.

Years ago two black-boys, leaving their *gins* (wives) on this small rock, went out one day in calm weather looking for turtle.

A thunder-storm came up suddenly from the west, their frail canoe was swamped and they were drowned. Those solitary *gins* on their solitary islet made a fire, and Barcoo himself was the hero who came over from the mainland to rescue them.

The dugong-hunters dared not linger then to enjoy the beauty of that weird spot seldom visited by man, for it afforded no safe anchorage. Pulling out once more into the tide, which was now favourable, they repassed rocks and reefs and that strange pinnacle which, now that the tide was low, showed at its base a flat rocky reef, and finally they made that night the islet of the Cannibal group which Barcoo had described. He had proved himself a trusty guide, for next morning when they sailed out from their anchorage they found themselves in a sea of shallow waters and mud-banks, and many of the banks were covered with short green weed. It was indeed the Paradise of their dugong-hunting dreams.

The black-boys spoke never a word as they cruised to and fro, their whole past, present and future was blotted out, their whole consciousness and purpose was centred in the momentary straining of eyesight, it was as if they and all their forbears had known experience of birth, life, death, only in order that they themselves might, in this dedicated hour, scan the horizon of the waters for a dugong. Wilhe's black pipe remained empty in his mouth as he squatted on the deck gazing up and down each mud-bank. Barcoo stood upright in the bows observing every ripple. Dick Silver kept the helm, and Old Man Lobb, having prepared the outfit, stood by the sail.

Suddenly Barcoo pointed away on the starboard bow and murmured: 'Dugong. Three big fella dugong.' His voice was low and husky with emotion. Quick as thought Old Man Lobb dropped the sail and they drifted down wind in the direction of Barcoo's pointing hand. Not a word was spoken. Dugong take little notice of a boat and apparently cannot see much with their small vicious-looking pigs' eyes, but at the least noise they are off to the bottom. Each man now took up his station; Old Man Lobb stood in the bows ready to shoot, while Barcoo looked to the harpoon line, standing by to pay it out and join fresh lines should they be needed, all the lines having been carefully coiled in buckets so that they would run out without a hitch. Wilhe was ready with an oar to keep the boat bows on to the dugong, and Dick Silver remained at the helm. Closer and closer they drifted down towards their quarry, three dugong could now be plainly seen by all the men, the silence seemed

to hum in that small boat. Although the harpoon gun could take out a hundred and fifty yards of line, it would drop a good deal even in twenty yards, and Old Man Lobb knew well that patience and self-control were needed to ensure a close shot and a fair hit. The three dugong were now disporting themselves quite near the boat, uttering their peculiar snore, and at last the moment came.

Old Man Lobb had played his part and hit the largest dugong, and immediately it was off, up wind, towing the boat behind it. For an hour and a half they played the great mammal, or perhaps it would be more near the truth to say that the great mammal played the boat, until at last it was exhausted, and then they towed it to the nearest beach and cut it up.

That evening a savoury smell rose from the camp, there was dugong soup and there was dugong steak for supper, and the *corroborree* of the black-boys, more high-pitched than ever, prolonged itself into the morning.

The return voyage, however, was not all smooth sailing. A fair breeze on the next day carried them well on their homeward course, and sunset found them coasting along the south-west shore of an island about nine square miles in extent, still in deep water, heading for a sandy bay that, according to Barcoo, afforded perfect anchorage. They were rounding a point as the sun set behind a ragged frieze of gum-trees on the mainland, when the tide lapping round the island met them full in the front; it was running like a torrent and between them and their haven was a shallow channel sown with up-jutting rocks. It was a matter of down sails, and out sweeps for the black-boys, Old Man Lobb steering and Dick Silver standing in the bows with cries of 'Port!' and 'Starboard!' as he sighted one rock and another, while once he had to leap out on to a rock and fend the boat off and jump in again. Finally, the black-boys scrambled overboard and towed the boat up to a sandy beach. It was a good camping-ground, but they had an all-night watch, for every half-hour as the tide rose they would have to pull the boat a little farther up the beach, the tide being too strong to anchor her far out.

Next morning they explored the island. The grass was thick and matted and creepers covered the ground. Probably neither black nor white man had set foot in that place for fourteen years. The last, and possibly the first, residents there had been neither black nor white, being in fact three yellow Chinamen, who collected trepang or *bêche-de-mer*. These gelatinous creatures, some eight

inches long, were found about the rocks at low water, but principally under the water; they were split, boiled, pressed flat and dried in the sun, then smoked and made into soup. The red sort would fetch eighty pounds a ton.

Some years ago two of those three Chinamen left for the mainland, and in their absence the blacks murdered Number Three and then roasted and ate him. The present camping-ground of the dugong-hunters was within a few feet of the murdered Chinaman's camp, indeed the shreds of his tent were still there. Since Barcoo had admitted that he had at one time worked for Chinamen, he had now to undergo many questions about the flavour of celestial kidneys, but he endeavoured to prove an alibi, relating further how the two mates returned eventually with a police inspector and black troopers, who 'dispersed' the murderers in the usual manner. That island was infested with death adders and brown snakes.

Two days later a well-contented, weather-beaten party landed on the beach below the home station, and that evening every verandah was filled with the fragrance of dugong soup. Dick Silver had gained experience and a ten days' growth of beard; Old Man Lobb was ragged, happy and already reminiscent on the joys of dugong-hunting; Barcoo had enhanced his reputation and Willie had earned ten shillings.

But Old Willie's triumph, like many another human victory, was doomed to end in anti-climax.

At that period the natives were all more or less addicted to opium-smoking. On remote cattle-stations the Boss, of course, could always regulate supplies, but when occasion offered a black fellow was quite ready to go 'on the burst,' and Willie considered that this was an occasion. No one knew the exact position of Willie Maggomboolloo's matrimonial relations, but he owned to having a wife, who was adorned by the name of Kitty, living in a camp a hundred miles down the road and only twenty miles out of town. The weekly mail-buggy passed through this camp both coming and going, and to Jim, the driver of this mail, Willie entrusted his ten shillings, with a message for Kitty that she must buy opium and send it up to him next week.

Next week came, and when the mail arrived there was a tiny package from Kitty, but it was only a match-box containing ashes of the opium that she had bought and smoked.

### THE RUNNING BROOKS.

*The Strange Death of Liberal England* : George Dangerfield (Constable, 12s. 6d. n.).

*The Problem of Hamlet : A Solution* : A. S. Cairncross (Macmillan, 7s. 6d. n.).

*A Royalist's Notebook · The Commonplace Book of Sir John Oglander*. Transcribed and Edited by Francis Bamford (Constable, 10s. n.).

*The Open Air : An Anthology of English Country Life* : Adrian Bell (Faber, 7s. 6d. n.).

*English Essays of To-day* : Forty-One Authors (Oxford University Press, 2s. 6d. n.).

*The Whole World and Company* : Reminiscences of Gretchen Green (Constable, 10s. n.).

*Canoe Errant on the Nile* : Major R. Raven-Hart (Murray, 7s. 6d. n.).

THE making of a really just assessment of so notable a contribution to recent political history as Mr. George Dangerfield's *The Strange Death of Liberal England* involves considerable qualifications in knowledge and experience, and inevitably many of those upon whom this brilliantly written book will lay its dominating spell may find themselves unable to lay claim to these. But putting aside what are perhaps best described as the technical-historical aspects of a subject which, in its broad outlines at least, is more or less familiar to the most cursory observer of the twentieth-century panorama, any reader can surrender himself unreservedly to the trenchant narrative, the witty observation, the force and economy of style which bring Mr. Dangerfield's pages to such vivid, humorous life. It is true that the dice he throws with so skilful an adroitness are often heavily loaded, that the smiles his verbal thrusts and parries evoke are sometimes a little wry, and that delighted chuckles may be cut short by the realisation that historical and political dignity stands upon dangerously insecure foundations. Yet there is sympathy as well as shrewdness in his portraits and deductions. Opening with the death of King Edward VII, the book traces and analyses the various crises which by 1914, according to its author, 'had reduced England to domestic anarchy'—their Lordships dying in the dark, the Tories', the women's, the workers' rebellions, the Irish challenge silenced by the crime at Serajevo of 'a printer's devil and a schoolboy.' And behind it all, for Mr. Dangerfield at any rate, is the long dying of pre-war Liberalism, 'supported, as it

still was in 1910, by Free Trade, a majority in Parliament, the ten commandments, and the illusion of Progress.' Acceptable or otherwise, his pictures and narrative compel attention by the boldness and brilliance of their lighting.

Shakespearian criticism is becoming more constructive and less fantastic than it has been at any time since a certain Mr. Smith about a century ago innocently, almost playfully, raised the bogey of Francis Bacon to the detriment of the true authorship. Having rollicked through cryptograms and the wilder courses of conjecture, we now see (or hope that we see) those antics out-dated and done with; and are encouraged in this by Dr. A. S. Cairncross's solution, as he rather hopefully calls it, of *The Problem of Hamlet*. His methods are entirely excellent, though his laborious presentation of suggestions and illustrative quotations is more likely to please students than readers of a less earnest determination. His theme is that Hamlet and the other great tragedies were written in Shakespeare's youth, and not in his middle-age; implying, therefore, a shifting earlier of the dates as generally accepted by the chronologists. With care and pains well taken, by comparing the First and Second Quartos and the First Folio, and examining the plays and other writings of contemporaries, as well as through the allusions to historical events, he makes out so good a case that we are inclined to believe it is a solution. In the courses of Shakespearian criticism, however, so many 'solutions' have gone by the board that even here we would rather for the present use a less absolute term.

Mr. Francis Bamford's admirable editing and transcription of The Commonplace Book of Sir John Oglander has made of *A Royalist's Notebook* a most interesting and entertaining volume from whose pages there emerges an engaging portrait of their writer that stands out against its background of other personalities and events in vigorous outline. Sir John Oglander (1585-1655) has 'long been known as the leading authority on Isle of Wight affairs in the reign of Charles I,' and these transcriptions of his journals, diaries, and annotated account-books which have been preserved for three hundred years at Nunwell House show him to have been a man of upright and sterling character who played no inconsiderable part in the contemporary history of the island he loved so well and served so faithfully. The book has also the additional charm of throwing an intimate, often humorous, light upon the affairs and circumstances of a seventeenth-century country gentleman, his domestic and family relations, his methods of farming and garden-

ing, his constant, anxious preoccupation with the problem of making income and expenditure meet, and his almost passionate desire that posterity should do as well by his name and estate as he himself endeavoured to do by them. It is an attractive picture, sharpened more than once to tragic outline in its simple records of personal bereavement, and deepened always by its setting of the troublous events that cast their political and individual shadow so darkly across the path of those who preserved their loyalty to the unhappy Charles, and as such it is a valuable enrichment of understanding of a very pleasant heritage as well as of a period.

In *The Open Air*, an Anthology of English Country Life, Mr. Adrian Bell has adopted the apparently popular method of modern anthologists of omitting the names of authors and their works from the body of the text and giving them only in a list of contents at the end. Appreciation or otherwise of this method of identification is a matter of individual taste. In this case it is, I think, completely justified, since Mr. Bell's aim has been to produce 'a book that should be read as other books are read, beginning at the beginning and going on to the end.' With this purpose in view, he wastes no time upon the merely picturesque or lyrical—poetry is indeed but scantily represented in his pages—desiring rather to include 'the tracing of that sense of community which has been the framework of English country life, coupled with the spirit of locality, which has made one village different from another in appearance, speech and customs.' In this he has indubitably succeeded. For the book does leave upon the mind of its reader an impression of something much deeper than extrinsic beauty, an impression of intrinsic life.

Yet another anthology, *English Essays of To-day*, has been prepared by the English Association as a companion volume to 'Poems of To-day' and 'Prose of To-day.' The present book includes work by forty-one authors on such varied subjects as Mr. A. P. Herbert's essay, 'About Bathrooms,' the late Mr. G. K. Chesterton 'On the Pleasures of No Longer Being Very Young,' Mr. Aldous Huxley's 'Superstitions,' Mr. Julian Huxley's 'An Essay on Bird-Mind,' Mr. R. B. Cunninghame Graham's 'Snow in Menteith,' Mr. H. M. Tomlinson's 'Beauty and the Beast,' Lord Ponsonby's 'Meiosis,' Miss Helen Waddell's 'The Hyacinth Fields,' and Sir Henry Hadow's 'The Meaning of Music' among many other pleasant, stimulating, or erudite contributions.

Miss Gretchen Green's *The Whole World and Company* is an

exceedingly disjointed, but lively and interesting account of her widely varied travels and experiences in places as far apart as Idaho, where she was a policewoman, India and China, where she worked and journeyed with Rabindranath Tagore, Morocco and Florida; of her association with Mrs. Harrison Eustis at the 'Seeing Eye,' the school for training dogs as guides for the blind, and of her membership of the expedition sent out by the Field Museum of Chicago to collect a hundred bronze heads representing contemporary racial types. The book gives an impression of astonishing versatility and energy, for Miss Green apparently can, and does, turn her hand to almost anything. Moreover, despite its complete lack of structural outline and the obscurity surrounding the identity of some of those who drift in and out of its crowded pages, it is written with so much infectious zest, and so much intelligent humour, that the reader is constantly interested and amused.

'Before all else I want to insist that this cruise was not a "stunt," like going over the Andes riding a giraffe backwards,' says Major R. Raven-Hart in his preface to *Canoe Errant on the Nile*. Why he should be so insistent on this point is not quite clear. For no reader of this delightful, informative, humorous book could suspect its writer of any intention of 'stunting' either physically or mentally. Major Raven-Hart is a recognised expert in the gentle art of canoeing and he employs his knowledge and experience solely in the pursuit of pleasure or information. The result of this most laudable pursuit is as entertaining and instructive a volume as one could wish to read. It is indeed difficult to say which aspect of it is the more fascinating—the record of his three-hundred-mile exploration of the Nile from Wadi Halfa to Upper Egypt with its clear-cut sketches of the river itself, the passing landscape, the Nubians who won so warm a place in his affection and respect, or his comments on the artistic and historical treasures that play so large a part in his vivid narrative of interest and comedy. Describing himself as 'a semi-sculptor,' the author has much to say about the temples, monuments, and buildings, their decorations and hieroglyphs inspected during his trip, which as well as his cross-references to and descriptions of many of the contents of the Cairo Museum has all the pertinence of knowledge without its pedantry. From the canoeer's point of view the book is a mine of information also, and the reader is left in envious appreciation of the author's ability as technician, critic, and writer.

M. E. N.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 155.

THE EDITOR of the CORNHILL offers two prizes of books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue, to the two solvers of the Literary Acrostic whose letters are opened first. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W 1, and must contain the Coupon from page 111 of the preliminary pages of this issue. They must reach the Editor by the 29th September

'O to dream, O to awake and ——  
There, and with delight to take and ——  
Through the trance of silence,  
Quiet breath !'

1. ' ——, O splendid ship, thy white sails crowding,  
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West,'
2. ' If, drunk with sight of power, we loose  
Wild tongues that have not Thee in —— '
3. ' He saw the gray little church across the park,  
The mounds that hid the loved and honour'd dead ;  
The —— arch, the chancel softly dark,'
4. ' I left the —— rose where it lay  
And set the new above.  
Why did my Summer not begin ? '
5. ' Our —— is accomplish'd. Once again  
We look on Europe, mistress as of yore '
6. ' That only I ——, that only you admire,  
Of the broad road that stretches and the roadside fire '

Answer to Acrostic 153, July number : ' Either was the Other's mine ' (Shakespeare : ' The Phoenix and the Turtle '). 1. *Endymio(n)* (Mark Akenside : ' The Nightingale '). 2. *I T* (Sir John Suckling : ' The Constant Lover '). 3. *Truth* (Keats : ' Ode on a Grecian Urn '). 4. *Hence* (Milton : ' l'Allegro '). 5. *EveR* (Keats : ' Fancy '). 6. *RiddleS* (Shelley : ' Hellas ').

The first correct answers opened were sent by F Hambyn Price, Esq., 7, Harley Gardens, The Bottoms, S.W.10, and Mrs. Carre, Brant Cottage, Osmington Mills, Weymouth. These two solvers are invited to choose books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue.

THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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OCTOBER 1936.

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*TWO DAYS OF THE DEVIL.*

BY WALLACE B. NICHOLS.

THE smithy at Brockenhurst lay in the shadow of a group of elms, and on that first day of August, about the fourth hour past noon, two horses, richly saddled and gleamingly bridled, were patiently waiting, side by side, to be shod. Their dismounted riders stood at the door of the forge, gazing in at the smith, who was working his bellows.

‘He must be deaf,’ muttered one of them, a man seemingly about thirty years of age, handsome enough in a fierce, raven sort.

‘He has his back towards us,’ said the other, a woman perhaps five years younger, handsome, too, in her kind, but not so dark, and certainly less imperious.

‘He is deaf—or wilfully sullen, the Saxon churl!’ said the man, and immediately strode into the smithy and caught the smith by the arm

The startled face that peered round at them, lit by the glow of the leaping flames, was so like a mask fashioned in Hell and gleamy still from the infernal fire, that the woman paled and caught her breath.

‘Mother of God!’ she murmured, and involuntarily crossed herself.

The smith growled unintelligibly in his native Saxon, glanced sideways at the horses without, nodded, growled another unintelligible sentence, and proceeded to take up from a rough bench beside him the necessary tools. Then he strode out into the roadway and began to labour at his task. The man followed him, and leaned his back against the smithy doorpost, watching with a keen eye to see that good work, and only good work, was done.

The woman had stepped back as the smith came out. She was still pale, but had begun to wonder whether the leaping light in the small, sunless forge had not played on her imagination, for, seen in daylight, the smith appeared curiously ordinary, save that he was exceptionally hairy. For the rest, he was small, lithe and dark—darker, indeed, than was usual in a Saxon. His beard and hair were alike stiff and curled.

He worked quickly, and the two horses were soon fitted, each with its needed shoe on right hindleg and left foreleg respectively. The animals had stood quietly enough while under his ministrations, but by the time that he had finished they were quivering and beginning to sweat. When, however, the woman remounted her own horse—which she did unhelped and immediately after it had been shod—its quivering and sweating ceased.

Her companion leapt into saddle in turn, and was in the act of flinging some coins to the smith when the latter made signs for him to wait, and disappeared into the recesses of the forge, to return presently, bearing in his hand six arrows. Quieting his horse with his hand, for the second beast was still quivering and sweating, and showing every desire to be away, the knight, for such was his condition, cried out impatiently :

‘What have you there?’

He spoke in the Norman tongue, and in the same tongue, but somewhat brokenly and with hesitation, the other replied :

‘Six arrows, Sir Knight, fit for the best huntsman in the world.’

‘I have good stock of arrows,’ replied the knight curtly.

‘Sir, I wrought them as a gift—for my lord the King.’

‘A gift for the King—from you, fellow?’

‘He is a great hunter, as was his father before him, and a great hunter loves good weapons.’

‘If they are for the King,’ said the knight, ‘why hand them to *me*?’

‘To tempt you, my lord!’ was the smith’s brief answer, and as he spoke his face seemed once again like a strange, fire-shot mask. But in that same moment the young Saxon lad, his assistant in the forge, had plied bellows energetically, so that a shower of sparks had roared up into the sunlight. The smith, standing in the shadows cast from the elms, had received the showery reflection fleetingly across his features.

‘Tempt me, you dark churl?’ cried the knight.

‘Feel them; poise them in your hand: swifter were never feathered, keener were never tipped.’

The knight took the arrows and closely examined them. He knew fine workmanship when he saw it, and his touch, as he fingered them, soon became almost a caress.

‘A king’s arrows, yes, by the Splendour of God!’ he cried. ‘Look, Adeliz,’ he went on, turning in the saddle and holding out

one of them for that lady's inspection. 'Run your finger along it—but take care of the barb. It is exquisitely wrought.'

She extended her hand, then suddenly drew it back.

'No,' she said, and shivered. 'No, I do not care to handle such things. I always think of the poor hunted creature whose beautiful coat it will pierce.'

That was true, but it was not the true reason for her refusal to take the arrow into her hand. Perhaps if it had been made by another smith her answer had been different; as it was, she felt, but could not have explained, a curious aversion which spread from his actual presence even to anything which he touched. The very sunlight itself seemed less vivifying because he was standing near; and a lark, singing overhead, was rather a bird of ill-omen than of joy because such a man was listening also to its song.

The knight laughed, and his dark face softened as he looked at her; then he turned abruptly to the smith, and asked:

'If these were wrought for the King, why do you not take them to the royal hunting-lodge?'

'To be kicked out by his mercenaries as though I were a mongrel cur?' cried the other bitterly.

'His mercenaries? Speak civilly when you have their name in your mouth. I am one of their captains, fellow: Ralph of Aix.'

The smith, instead of cowering away as the knight had expected, stood his ground, and a faint, ironical smile curled about the long, thin mouth visible amid his curling beard and drooping moustache.

'I was in hopes, my lord, to have a favourable word spoken about my coming—that I might be let in at the gates.'

'I see, rogue, I see!' said the captain of mercenaries, frowning, and he handed back the six arrows.

Was it a gleam of anger, or a glance of irony, that lit the eyes of the smith?—fugitively it shone, but at once heavy lids meekly dropped as he accepted the arrows and stepped aside. Ralph of Aix shook his reins, and his horse began to move on. Suddenly the animal shied, and then stood in its tracks immovably, trembling all over.

'The curse of Mahound on you!' cried his master. 'What ails you, Paladin?'

For all his caresses of hand and voice he could not make the animal stir. It stood, snorting, quivering, with foam about its mouth.

And now the other horse caught something of its companion's

fear. Without actually shying, it made a half-turn in the dusty roadway, and remained with forefeet obstinately planted, and breathing heavily through distended nostrils.

The knight swore darkly as he plied his spurs in vain. The woman shrieked on a sudden.

'Look, look!' she cried. 'He is a necromancer!'

And she pointed towards the doorway of the smithy.

The knight levelled a narrow stare. The smith stood on the threshold of the forge, with his right hand stretched up to the wooden lintel, and his left raised in the air as though frozen in the very making of a wizard's mystic sign.

'Pestilent churl!' burst out the knight, and his fingers clutched at the hilt of his dagger.

'You are mistaken, lady,' said the smith calmly. 'The horses are not frightened by *me*. Is it the first time that a fallen branch has looked like a snake in the way?'

['Certainly, when they looked, they saw in the hot dust, right in the horses' way, a suggestively shaped piece of rotted bough, evidently fallen from one of the elms overhead.

Adeliz Tyrell once more crossed herself, and even Ralph of Aix breathed a thankful mutter of prayer.

The smith was quick to seize the moment.

'My lord,' he said humbly, stepping out again from the smithy and cringing for the first time at the mercenary's stirrup, 'a word left at the King's gates were little for you and much for me, and if I have done good work . . .'

'Let us go from here . . . at once, Ralph,' besought Adeliz. 'Promise him anything, so that we ride on.'

'If our beasts will but move,' he answered in exasperation.

The smith crossed the roadway and with his foot sent the bough hurtling into the heaped leaves of the ditch. The horses immediately relaxed, and one of them whinnied and pawed the ground impatiently.

'Thanks, fellow,' cried Ralph of Aix. 'Bring your arrows to-morrow, and we will see.'

The two riders passed on. The smith, watching them, saw them break into a canter and presently disappear into the great forest. Then he turned quickly back into his forge to cuff the lad who, interested in the events outside, had been neglecting his work at the bellows.

The riders meanwhile had entered one of the long forest droves,

and there had restrained their animals to a walking pace. They rode at first in silence, and the thoughts of neither, to judge from their expressions, were at one with the leafy peace about them. Fluted notes called antiphonally from time to time, pine cones dropped with a noise as of dim thunder; and sometimes the trees would murmur mysteriously together, high in their gilded crowns: but nothing of it passed into the consciousness of the silent man and woman who were riding through that summer-bannered woodland, helplessly broken to the knowledge of the same passionate dream.

Sir Ralph of Aix suddenly laid a hand on his companion's reins, checking his own horse in the same instant.

'We shall be too soon home,' he said brusquely, 'with nothing settled between us.'

She made a despairing gesture.

'What may be settled between us,' she asked, 'save that we love—and must part?'

'By the eyes of Saint Blaise,' he burst out, 'I will not suffer it! Why has a man a right arm if he cannot take what he desires?'

'That is the King's mercenary in you,' she answered, half-rebukingly, half-timidly.

'It is the lover in me,' he riposted, 'and in that I am no man's mercenary, only a slave, Adeliz—yours!' he added passionately.

'Oh, Ralph . . .' she murmured, and finished her sentence with a tender glance.

'Let us end it,' he cried, 'in the only true way. There are other kings to serve than William of England, and with my troop of wild knaves I can always find my hire. Let us oversea and have done with this silence and pretence before the world. It sorts with neither my own pride nor with my pride in *you*.'

She shook her head, slowly, mournfully, and began to urge her horse forward again.

'By Heaven, but you must answer!' he said, keeping his own horse at pace with hers.

'I dare not do it,' she breathed, so low that he was not sure of her words, though their meaning was plain in the unhappy eyes which she had turned to his.

'You do not love me, then, Adeliz,' he said. 'You cannot—or your eyes would flame at the thought of so going with me, not turn dim with tears.'

The misery in her glance became tinged with otherwise dumb reproach.

A narrow bridle-track crossed the drove down which they were riding ; as they came to it he dismounted, and held out his hand silently to help her from the saddle. She hesitated, a flush welling into her cheeks ; then she took his proffered aid and dismounted in turn. She knew whither he was making, and moved on ahead, slowly, gracefully, along the bridle-track which, after a short distance, began to wind. Leading the horses, he followed. They came presently to a small natural arbour, floored with bright moss and roofed with entwining stems in full leaf. She entered, and stood motionless in the soft, green light. He tethered the horses to a tree near by, then strode to her side and took her into his arms.

She gave herself to his kiss eagerly—then her eagerness dwindled into passivity. But he would not let her draw away, and the efflorescence of passion which had been mutual became as though merely selfish and one-sided.

‘ Let be,’ she murmured, ‘ we must not.’

‘ While I hold you, heart’s love,’ he answered, ‘ you are mine—and while you are mine I will hold you,’ he added with a kiss that was more passionate still.

Deep in the forest, far away, rang the notes of a hunting-horn.

‘ Now will you oversea with me ? ’ he asked, laughing in amorous triumph at having had so burningly his will of her lips. He kept his arms about her, and looked fiercely down into her eyes.

‘ What were the use ? ’ she answered. ‘ We should be the Church’s outlaws, and our children would be without heritage.’

‘ They would be in no worse case than Arletta’s son,’ he replied, ‘ who yet inherited Normandy—and took England. “ William the Bastard,” “ William the Conqueror ” : by either title he was famous and powerful and of great honour among men.’

She was silent, and laid her head against his breast. He felt her body trembling in his hold.

‘ Why did you marry him ? ’ he asked suddenly. ‘ Had your heart no whisper for you, bidding you wait for the destiny of love that comes to us all ? Did you never guess that the right man would yet find you ? Why did you marry him ? ’ he repeated, unconsciously gripping her arms until he hurt her.

‘ It was my father’s will, and I was so young,’ she answered. ‘ And Walter’s lands in Essex marched with those of my dowry. What could I do but obey ? He has been kind to me, and loves me, alas,’ she added piteously.

‘ The Devil’s curse upon him ! ’ he muttered.

'No, no!' she cried, and put her hand across his lips.

'That is not how to stay me,' he laughed. 'But so, and so, and only so!' And he silenced his own words full upon her mouth.

The hunting-horn sounded again from the distant recesses of the forest.

'The King,' muttered Ralph of Aix, 'and Tyrell with him. We are safe here for an hour yet.'

'Safe . . .' she breathed against his heart. 'Shall I ever be safe again?'

'Always,' he answered, 'with my arms about you and my sword ready to my hand.'

'But safe from myself?' she went on. 'And from you?'

She looked up once more into his face with a numbed expression of mingled exaltation and humility.

'Always,' he said, and something in his thoughts made him suddenly release her.

She moved a pace or so apart, and stood gazing into the forest tangledness, and it seemed no more twisted and contorted than the dark tangles of her own fate. The spot to which they had come was so secretly dense and overhung that no single ray of the sun penetrated like a pointing finger. Nature was providing no visible metaphor for her inner comfort.

The mercenary bit his underlip, and watched her with a certain unease. Used, as he was, primarily to the companionship and command of men, his knowledge of femininity was scant and cursory. Its mystery seemed profound, and his reaction to it had all the brazening timidity of a youth at his first contact with the real unexpectedness of life. The mood of Adeliz Tyrell, therefore, filled him with blank surmises which his temperament could not allow him to follow to their logical conclusions, for, like a very soldier, he would be more likely to take an energetic short cut across feminine delicacy of spirit than to wait upon its self-revealing. Nevertheless, the moment held for him both uncertainty and exasperation.

'There is the choice to be made,' he said firmly, 'if but for truth's sake. When the King goes across sea to conquer Anjou, as I think he purposes, and I and your husband go with him, I must know in my heart whether I am to seek death in battle—or kill Tyrell,' he added silently in his secret breast.

'O Ralph, Ralph, this tears my soul. . . .'

'Tears it not mine, too?' he parried.



The thought came to her unbiddenly, terrible in its clear-sightedness, that Chance might solve all for her even in the briefest of skirmishes, then she crossed herself hastily and repentantly, her soul suddenly sick with its involuntary imaginations.

‘What is it to be?’ he demanded. There was no pleading in his tone, only a forceful directness. He made as though to take her once more in his arms, but she eluded his clasp, and he did not follow her as she took a pace or so, slowly, towards the tethered horses. Yet she did not go to them, but turned after a few steps, and stood, a slim, lissom figure in her riding-dress of embroidered doe-skin. With an impatient gesture she tore off her close-fitting huntsman’s half-hood, adorned with a heron’s feather. Her dark hair underneath had been plaited round and round her shapely head.

‘My brown star!’ he cried out.

The gleam of a moment sparkled deep down within her eyes, and then was gone, lost in a weary smile, and her face grew strained with the tokens of her dark, intimate unrest.

‘Leave Tyrell and your lands,’ he urged vehemently. ‘I will win you other lands in France or the South. My free-lances shall carve out a kingdom for you, and you shall be queen over more than your lover. There are no bounds to the opportunities of a great mercenary captain—and I am not so unfamous at my trade!’ he added proudly.

‘Could it but be! . . .’ she murmured.

‘Of what are you afraid?’ he demanded curtly. ‘Loose tongues and the pointed finger?’

‘They mean so much to a woman.’

‘But are nothing against love and the great splendours of adventure—which shall be ours.’

‘Yours,’ she countered sadly. ‘We women have not a man’s activities, and our truer glories are passive. We are dependent for our poise not on the bruit of our deeds, as you, but on the world’s silence concerning us.’

He made an impatient gesture, then laughed with a kind of fierce tenderness.

‘Your place is over my crupper,’ he said, ‘on a galloping horse, with my free-lances about us, and your husband outridden and spent in his saddle!’

She smiled wanly, and moved towards the more open forest path, and there stood awhile, fondling her horse’s hot muzzle.

He followed, untethered both animals, and in silence helped her to mount. After a brief circuit they came out again into the great drove a little farther on.

'To-morrow,' he said bitterly, 'will be as to-day, just as to-day has been as yesterday. We have settled nothing.'

'Forgive me,' she answered. 'Forgive my fears and doubts. It is no light decision for a woman, and a wife, to make. I will think, Ralph, and pray. . . .'

'Pray!' he muttered contemptuously.

'Yes, Ralph, pray,' she repeated. 'The Mother of God has heard, and answered, many such prayers as mine will be, I make no question. So many poor women have hurting flames in their hearts!'

'Neither think nor pray overlong, Adeliz,' he warned her gruffly. 'I am at the end of patience.'

They rode on for a time in a silence broken only by the sporadic note of the royal hunting-horn. Muffled by the thick leafiness of the forest, it was difficult to tell how near or how far away that imperious call was being sounded; but the chase seemed to be drawing closer. Occasionally, too, the baying of the hounds could now be heard.

Adeliz Tyrell, waking from her own thoughts, glanced at the face of her companion: it was set and flushed, as though he were angered.

'Oh, Ralph,' she pleaded, 'be patient but a little.'

'What call you a little?' he demanded between his teeth.

'And how do I know that my patience will be . . . rewarded?'

'It may be,' she answered, lifting her head suddenly. 'I come of the Giffards, a reckless race.'

'Tell me before curfew,' he said, as though he possessed all the rights of insistence.

She laughed on a sudden.

'Why are you merry?' he asked sourly. 'Is it that you delight to plague me? You are always too April for a man's wits.'

'I am neither merry,' she answered, 'nor April-mooded. I laughed because it is the Giffard recklessness to laugh when life cries for decision—and while we are laughing,' she added, serious again, 'the moment for decision, as often as not, passes and is gone. I know the faults of my house.'

'You will tell me by curfew,' he repeated abruptly. 'I shall

come to you wherever you are, though the King himself calls for me then.'

She gave his stubbornness no answer, and they rode on, silent again. The drove ended in a clearing, and from the clearing debouched two wide glades and a bridle-path. They took one of the glades, and it brought them, after a brief trot, to the King's hunting-lodge on the outskirts of Brockenhurst. Since leaving the smithy they had ridden almost a complete semicircle.

The hunting-lodge was large enough to house no small number of guests and attendants; if not a palace, it was at least a dwelling fit for a king in his hours of leisure and sport. Besides the main building, which was half of wood and half of stone, there were subsidiary buildings, like outhouses, but domiciles instead of barns, in which were accommodated certain of the court who had been privileged to bring their wives to the chase—privileged by a monarch so indifferent to women that his very tolerance of their presence at such a masculine gathering as was usually a Norman hunting-party showed the measure of his contemptuous and perverted coldness to their attractions.

At the gates they were met by their waiting grooms, who took charge of the horses. The two then passed within, Ralph of Aix into the hunting-lodge itself, and Adeliz Tyrell to the outer quarters assigned to her husband and herself. Before they separated, a brief whisper was the only continuation of their previous speech:

'At curfew,' he breathed, 'I shall come.'

'Come? Oh, no!—no, no!'

'At curfew!'

And he turned on his heel.

Adeliz retired at once to her chamber, a long, narrow room lit only by a single window-slit, so shaped that an arbalest might be used at the aperture. The sunlight, streaming in, flicked the strewn rushes with whips of gold. Dismissing her attendant, who had helped her to change into an indoor costume of soft, flowing blue, girdled with a belt of silver, she sat on a low couch under the window-slit, leaning her arm on the embrasure. The sunlight caressed her wrist and one swinging foot; the rest of her was in warm, tawny shadow.

Consciously she did not analyse her thoughts; it was not an age of self-analysis except perhaps in the cloister, and there it might be given another term. But she knew that her feeling for her husband was only a friendly gratitude for kindness, and that

her feeling for Ralph of Aix was something which stirred both her soul and her body. She responded to his nearness with a kind of glad shamelessness, and in the hours of separation was on fire with memories that were exultances. It was still too new a passion for her heart to have looked ahead at all scrupulously ; the moments had been too exciting for any calm assessment of the future. She was loved and she loved, and had lived since the revelation of that in a dream from which her lover's insistence was waking her against her will. She was not the first woman to find a man's possessiveness defeat her primary instinct to drift. But she would be able to drift no longer. Romantically stolen moments must either come to an end—or be made brazen to the world. And that would be the beginning of a new life, the breaking of ties, the disintegration of habit. Divorce, except in cases where the political expedience of the Papacy was also served by the freeing of individuals so highly set as to be pawns on the map of Europe, was unobtainable and inesplicable ; she would have to go through life as the free companion of a leader of Free Companions !

Her lover meanwhile had entered the King's hunting-lodge, and had seated himself upon one of the stools at the long refectory table that occupied, cross-wise, one end of the hall. He sat, not as though in order to eat, but leaning back against the table. He stared into space, frowning. He was still frowning and staring into space when the various clamours of the returning hunt broke into the courtyard as in the utmost of haste, horses checked in mid-career, dogs barking, men shouting and laughing. William the Red never rode either measuredly or with regard to his dignity, but only in harmony with the ever-changing violences of his thoughts and ambitions.

A moment later, with a half-dozen companions at his heels, he entered the hall, blaspheming and laughing in a breath. His blasphemy was no indication of anger ; it was a mere habit of speech. He was usually, indeed, more blasphemous of tongue when pleased than when in wrath, and it was considered a good sign by his courtiers when he took the name of God in vain with any new or particular obscenity.

Rising upon the King's blustering entrance, Sir Ralph of Aix suddenly saw his master, whose born subject he was not, with a special and unwonted clarity. It was as though the emotions of the afternoon had sharpened his perceptions, or awakened unsuspected intuitions.

He saw a man in the prime of middle life, with a strong, fierce, dominant face, ruddy and moustached, and with a broad, intellectual forehead crowned by a mass of red hair, curling about the brows and at the nape of the neck. He was sturdily built but somewhat short in stature, and he had the slightly bandy legs of a man continually on horseback. Previously Ralph had considered him as but the crowned hirer of a mercenary sword, with the powerful temper that commanded instant obedience; now, looking at him with a new eye, he discovered a strange soul in him, as though God, thought the soldier, marvelling the while at his own imagination, had meant to create a seraph and had changed mind in mid-fashioning and had wrought instead a human jackal, leaving in the process, however, enough warped magnificence stamped on the features to bear witness to the rumour of that original divine intention.

‘You did not hunt with us, Ralph,’ said the King as soon as his glance lighted upon the mercenary. ‘Why?’ he demanded curtly.

‘My horse, sire, needed shoeing,’ quietly replied Ralph of Aix, and his respect was that of a man who knew his own value.

‘Ha!’ cried Rufus, as though the answer was satisfactory and yet equally as though any such satisfactoriness of reply was a thing to be grudged to an underling. To be baulked of doing an injustice is disturbing to the peculiar equilibrium of a tyrant.

He seated himself heavily on another of the stools at the long table, irrespective of any precedence of place. He was the King, and where he chose to sit became at once the King’s seat.

Those who had entered with him were six in number: Gilbert de l’Aigle, Roger and Gilbert de Clare, Robert Fitz-Hamon, William de Breteuil, and Walter Tyrell, the Lord of Poix. At an impatient sign from their master they sat down with him at the table, which two or three grooms were already heaping with meats, fruits and drink.

‘Need you shoeing yourself?’ cried the King to Ralph of Aix, who had remained standing. ‘Sit, man, sit!’

The only stool left vacant was to the right hand of Tyrell. The mercenary took it with an involuntary distaste.

The meal began. They ate hungrily, and drank thirstily—but not for drinking’s sake. William, whatever his vices, was no drunkard, nor did he choose drunkards for his boon-companions. Presently, without ceremony, they talked, at first of the day’s

hunting, each man full of his own skill or luck, the sagacity of his horse or of his favourite among the hounds; and then they fell to discussing their plans for the morrow's chase—until the King, growing expansive, began to speak of another kind of chase than any within his new great forest.

'By the Splendour of Heaven,' he cried, 'I have a dream in my heart fierier than the largest ruby in my crown!'

He smote the table with his clenched fist, and looked at each of his companions in turn, frowning with a virile haughtiness. It was a certain natural magnificence in the Red King, rather than either his royalty or his vehemence, which secured instant attention to what followed.

'I will die an Emperor,' the King went on. 'There shall be a new empire in Europe, the Empire of Gaul and Britain. I am the overlord of Scotland in name; but Scotland shall be made to submit to me in more than a feudal courtesy between crown and crown! Maine, too, shall be made to submit—at the sword's point if necessary. And Ireland will I conquer; and Aquitaine will I buy. Then for France! With such power at my back, France, a dismembered mass of petty and jealous lordships as she is—eh, my Lord of Poix?' he interjected, turning sarcastically to Tyrell—'will fall to my hand as easily as a ripe pear. Emperor of Gaul and Britain!' he repeated. 'That is my dream.'

A murmur of subservient applause ran from mouth to mouth around the table. Walter Tyrell and Ralph of Aix alone, uncourtierlike, remained silent. The King, glancing at them, misread what he saw in their eyes, and with a foul oath blasphemously asked:

'What ails the Frenchmen? One of you is my hired soldier, the other my subject by tenure. Do you grudge your lord an ambition that will add honours and pomps to your obediences?'

Ralph of Aix, who had been wondering whether, when it came to the promised war, it would be William's banner that he would follow and his hire that he would take, assumed a cynicism contrary to his real mood of the moment, and answered:

'Let but your trumpet, sire, sound golden—and to Free Companions Trebizond, Jerusalem and Hell itself come alike. Or Mayet, too,' he added, unguardedly sarcastic. 'But I was not there!' he went on, glancing at Fitz-Hamon, who had not exactly covered himself with glory at the unsuccessful siege of that castle in Maine, where William had nearly found death as well as defeat.

Fitz-Hamon glared angrily across the table, but the King only laughed, magnanimously humorous, and drank to the mercenary's health.

'Mayet Castle has given us all,' said Tyrell suddenly, 'a good foretaste of our triumphs to come.'

William looked sharply at the speaker. Was this the beginning of a 'gab'? And was he himself in the mood for that peculiarly Provençal type of wit, wherein it was part of the game to provoke big talk and then to mock at it, each side seeking to fire the other's temper and to control its own? It was like Tyrell, thought William, still eyeing the other narrowly, to hold a 'gab' with his liege-lord, and usually he himself enjoyed it, doffing, for the while, his inconvenient royalty the better to participate equally in that recognised and privileged thrust and parry of daring speech.

There was a brief silence. Tyrell, with a smile on his finely cut lips, challenged with his eyes the King to 'gab' with him, and the others, not quite sure of the monarch's mood, awaited William's response in carven and watchful uneasiness. Suddenly the King relaxed.

'How so?' he demanded, and the 'gab' began.

'It will have taught us,' replied Tyrell, 'the difference between boasting and performance.'

'If I left Mayet,' said Rufus, 'I took Le Mans.'

'A cock of a different plumage,' riposted Tyrell, 'and with draggled wings. And it took a king's whole power to crack a second-rate fortress!'

'But at Le Mans I had Sir Ralph of Aix with me,' cried William, laughing satirically across the table at the mercenary.

'Likewise the might of England!' went on Tyrell.

'Well?' snapped the King sharply.

'It is only, sire, that you talk of empire,' was the answer, spoken with provocative suavity.

'Can a king's thoughts be more royally employed?' asked Rufus, and his smile was a kind of raillery, but more imperious at root than defensive. He was as sure of his powers as of his power.

Tyrell, not entirely in the histrionic spirit of the 'gab,' yet under cover of its licence, suddenly laughed broadly:

'But you do nothing!'

'Nothing! By the face of Luke, nothing!' burst out William.

'Make that good, Walter—or this is no "gab."'

'You take a castle—or do not take a castle!—and then come

home again and hunt. When have you carried a long campaign to the triumphant conclusion of a battle on the grand scale—as your father did? What Senlac stands to your name?’

‘In the year before Senlac,’ parried William, ‘who, among my father’s knights, was its prophet?’

‘In the year before Senlac the Duke of Normandy was not boasting of a kingdom.’

William controlled his mounting irritation with difficulty, and though he swore out of a foul mouth, his smile was accounted by his companions as a point in that game of words to him.

Tyrell replenished his own cup, and then, with a deadly smoothness, continued:

‘The boaster who has no opportunity is a man of folly, but you, sire, who have opportunity, need not boast, but should perform. Reckon your powers: the men of Brittany are yours, the men of Maine, and the men of Anjou; the Flemings hold from you, and the Burgundians follow your banner as being their king’s. Moreover, Eustace of Boulogne would do anything for you, either as ally or servant.’

‘And so?’ asked the King brusquely.

‘So why do you delay? Why are you in Brockenhurst—and not in Paris? Or is this the leisure of Cæsar, worn by the toils of conquest? The taking of Le Mans must have been a mighty strain!’

William received the gibe as a man, walking on a height in a storm of wind, might some unexpected and heavier gust: staggeringly yet without losing foothold.

‘Wait, little Frenchman,’ he said, ‘wait, and keep but next Christmas with me, and you will see Cæsar’s leisure: his foot on the necks of kings.’

Tyrell drank, and laughed.

‘Fine words—that not even your great father could have made good,’ he mocked.

‘My father’s vassals,’ flashed back Rufus, ‘were better men than mine!’

He glanced round the table, partly in amused satire, partly with the real feeling that he had spoken only too truly.

‘Christmas . . .’ pursued Tyrell. ‘Your father was crowned on a Christmas. Where are we to keep next Christmas with you, sire?’

‘At Poitiers,’ answered William instantly. ‘By the face of



Luke, but I will keep it in imperial state! I mean to lead my host as far as to the Alp mountains, and bring all to that boundary under my yoke, and then will I turn back west and keep my feast at Poitiers—whither I bid you all to testify to my words!’

Tyrell looked the King in the eyes. It was difficult for the others to tell whether, in what followed, he was still subtly ‘gabbing’ or speaking, under its privilege, out of the deeps of his heart.

‘A great matter, indeed,’ he began, ‘to go to the Alp mountains and thence back in triumph to Poitiers in time for Christmas, Emperor of Gaul and Britain! By God, but Burgundians and Frenchmen will deserve to die as meanly as dogs if they march to any such war as subjects of the English!’

‘There shall be neither Burgundians nor French, nor yet Angevins, Aquitanians, Normans or English to lift stubborn heads,’ cried William, ‘but only *my* subjects, and let him look to it who calls himself other in that day!’

‘Everywhere already your subjects are called the English,’ said Tyrell angrily.

‘They shall be called by what name I will,’ retorted Rufus. ‘I am King of England.’

‘Must all of us change our skins to please your vanity?’ demanded Tyrell.

‘You may be the Lord of Poix, my Frenchman,’ said the King, ‘but you are my liege-man for lands in Essex, and for ~~your~~ *your* wife’s English lands, too. You will follow my banner to the mountains, Walter, as one of my English. Ralph yonder serves me for pay, but you from a subject’s duty.’

The hall suddenly darkened as the King spoke. It was not yet sunset, but the purple clouds of a storm had begun massing in the west. The ominous lividity touched each man with unease. There was a restless stir about the table. Even the King changed attitude on his stool.

‘So at the whim of a boaster, who has promised us these glories so often and never achieved them yet,’ pursued Tyrell, ‘we must give ourselves a mythical nationality that never was in the world! Faith of a gentleman, but I, for one, will wait awhile. The necessity may not arise,’ he added with a scornful laugh.

There was a low mutter of ironical thunder in the distance. The trees about the hunting-lodge began to wave clashingly in an eerie, sudden wind.

‘Also,’ went on Tyrell coldly, and he was the calmest man

present, 'I would play a good jape to prevent France from becoming any empire's appendage—as would the Pope, too, most surely. Shall you hold your Christmas Feast, sire, besieged in Poitiers? Europe may band together, unable to stomach so lunatic an ambition.'

William rose so hastily that his stool fell as he moved from the table.

'This "gab" is finished,' he said. 'Body of God, but it is hot!' he went on, wiping his moist brow with the back of his right hand.

He crossed to the window, an unshuttered square opening in the middle of the long wall, and stared out into the livid sky. Thunder, from time to time, muttered but did not seem to be drawing nearer; lightning flashed spasmodically above the fringe of the forest.

'It is as dark as curfew in winter,' the King cried, 'and as levined as Hell!'

He stood for a while, brooding. The others watched him in silence. They had risen with his rising. Suddenly he turned, flashed a swift, penetrating glance at the Lord of Poix, and then strode with ungainly heaviness out of the hall. His voice, echoing away, was heard calling impatiently for his esquire.

After his going the others uneasily interrogated one another without word spoken, and as with one impulse the eyes of his companions fastened accusingly upon Tyrell.

'You daring fool!' burst out William de Breteuil. 'Could you not give a safer twist to your wit? He will be in a foul mood for days—and our hunting will become a penance instead of a sport. Splendour of Heaven, what ailed you, man, to play so with a tetchy lion? It is not as though you did not know him in his fierceness.'

'Oh, I know him,' replied Tyrell, and deliberately yawned. 'I played him as far as he was playable—and then he took to his heels.'

'Rather than loose his wrath in the privileged "gab,"' retorted Fitz-Hamon. 'You can thank the magnanimity of a gentleman for that,' he added, and turned away to the window. A flash of summer lightning in the same moment lit the hall. It was followed, not by a roll of thunder—for the storm itself seemed to be travelling in another direction—but by the first brazen note of a great bell, beginning to toll.

'Curfew!' muttered Gilbert de Clare.

With murmured courtesies, they separated, and presently Tyrell and Ralph of Aix found themselves alone in the hall, side by side. There was a brief silence. It was broken by Tyrell.

‘He will set all Europe by the ears,’ he said, and gave a long look into the eyes of the mercenary. ‘War, waged by a great captain, is terrible enough; but war waged by incompetence is surely the Devil’s privy jest!’

Once more he gave the mercenary a long look; then abruptly added:

‘There is one of the hounds sick. I am going to the kennel. Good night.’

With that he hastily left the hall.

The mercenary remained for a moment in thought. Then he, too—but with a more eager step than the other—went out, and another glare of lightning illuminated but the hall’s emptiness.

Instead of turning into his bedchamber, he strode into the courtyard, paused to look carefully about, and then crossed, without sound but not furtively, towards the separate quarters where Adeliz Tyrell, as also the wives of William de Breteuil and Gilbert de l’Aigle, had her apartment.

It was as yet really not more than late dusk, but the laterally passing storm had expunged the normal vestiges of light, and shadows, deep as night’s own, lay everywhere; and it was unbelievably hot.

The mercenary made for the arrow-slit of her chamber. It was just level with his head when he stood before it, and he could gaze within. But it was too dark to see anything, except a grey blur which perhaps was she.

‘Adeliz,’ he whispered.

The grey blur moved.

‘Go, go,’ she breathed. ‘Thou art mad to come.’

‘It is curfew,’ he answered. ‘I said I should come.’

‘Thou wilt be seen,’ she went on.

‘Give me your answer, and I will go.’

‘Not now; to-morrow,’ she temporised, yet knew already well enough what her answer was to be.

‘To-night,’ he said fiercely. ‘I shall not ask you to-morrow.’

‘Speak softly. Agnes de Breteuil is in the next chamber,’ she warned. ‘Oh, go, go! I am afraid.’

‘I will go when I am answered.’

‘The very shadows seem to move.’

'Tyrell is at the kennel.'

'There *is* someone there in the shadow. Go, go . . .'

'Will you leave him?' he persisted. 'Will you come with me oversea?'

'I am sure we are being watched. Oh, go, Ralph!'

'I will go when I am answered,' he repeated. 'I love you, Adeliz. Come with me. There is no life for us apart.'

'I know, Ralph, I know,' she sighed, and her face seemed like a dim flower at the arrow-slit.

'I love you,' he said again.

The gate of the kennel was heard to clash.

'For the sake of the Mother of God, Ralph, go!' she whispered urgently.

He did not move.

'Will you come oversea with me?' was his only answer.

They could hear Tyrell's nearing footsteps. But the shadows had deepened at last into authentic darkness.

'Quick, tell me, Adeliz! I shall never ask you again if you do not answer me now.'

'Oh, Ralph . . .'

 she said, and there, with her hand at her throat, paused.

'Which is it to be?' he urged with a brusque impatience. The soldier, in the presence of danger, was beginning to assert himself over the lover. 'Answer me, Adeliz!' he said, as though addressing a company of his free-lances.

'Yes . . . I will come with you,' she breathed, and then, even as he heard, her flower-like face was gone from the slit.

As he moved away, a last, late glimmer of lightning lit the courtyard. He cursed under his breath. Had it been vivid enough for him to be recognised?

He sought his bed uneasily—and yet triumphantly.

In the blank middle of the night he was awakened by wild screams.

Hastily rising, he flung on a furred gown, and went into the corridor. There he found Robert Fitz-Hamon and two of the King's attendants running towards the royal bedchamber. One of the attendants bore a light.

'The King,' muttered Fitz-Hamon hoarsely. 'It was the King!'

A drawn sword was in his hand; for the rest, he was in a riding cloak, hurriedly girdled. The attendants were fully garbed, and their hands were at their daggers as they ran.

The sight that met their apprehension, as Fitz-Hamon drew aside the arras at the archway into the cell-like room in which the King slept, was more awesome than startling. It was as though they were the intimate witnesses of the naked terror of a lost soul.

The King was sitting upright in his bed, staring into vacancy with a distraught gaze, and muttering words that probably he had not spoken since he learnt them at his mother's knee—a childish prayer for safety against the roaming of the Devil in the night.

They clustered at the threshold, scarcely daring to enter, knowing the wrath of any man who is surprised in the privacy of his soul, and when that man is a king, and such a king, his wrath, as well they were aware, might have consequences to be dreaded by even a favourite. So when at last, seeing them, the King spoke, and they found his speech simple and without anger, they breathed relievedly and the colour came back to their cheeks.

Fitz-Hamon moved on a few paces into the King's chamber, his lowered, naked sword still in his hand.

'Sire,' he murmured, 'sire, what is it?'

He spoke with the confident smoothness of a favourite, and yet he was troubled at heart. He had never seen his master in such a pallid mildness before, and knew that he must walk warily as through an unknown defile that threatened an ambush.

'I have dreamed a dream,' began William, and he was trembling and sweating. 'I was sick, and being bled by an Arab physician—I seemed to have gone to the crusade with my brother Robert—and suddenly the blood flowing from my vein gushed up like spray and became a red whirlpool about me until it veiled the light of the sun, and I was lost in a crimson mist, threshing about with my arms to find escape, and being choked at every step by breathing my own blood instead of air.'

He covered his eyes with his hands, for the horror was still upon him. Then he looked up, the utmost of surprise imprinted upon his face.

'I woke with the name of Our Lady on my lips,' he said. 'Our Lady's name,' he repeated in a scared, awed whisper.

'It was but a dream, my lord,' said Fitz-Hamon, and went a pace or so nearer to the bed; and he laid his bare sword across a stool.

'I am sorry to have disturbed you, gentlemen,' continued the King, eyeing Fitz-Hamon and Ralph of Aix in turn with an unwonted and curiously sweet smile. Then his expression changed.

The terror of his dream was rapidly fading ; and his regal poise returned.

‘Leave me a light,’ he said abruptly to the attendants.

They set a light by the bedside, and then he bade them go.

‘I shall not sleep, I think,’ he went on. ‘Will you bide with me, Robert?’ he asked, turning to Fitz-Hamon.

‘Surely, my lord.’

‘Then I will not keep you, Sir Ralph of Aix,’ said the King, glancing through narrowed lids at the mercenary, and so dismissed him. Yet, as that captain was passing out, he stayed him peremptorily.

‘Let there be no word of my dream!’ he cried. ‘Hark you, no word! And command the same to my two servants—who had eyes and ears for too much. Warn them—on pain of losing those eyes and ears!’

Again the King dismissed him, this time finally.

William passed the rest of the night in desultory and spasmodic converse with Robert Fitz-Hamon, discussing his ambitious schemes, but breaking off continually to stare across the chamber with wide, unseeing eyes, as though still shaken by the ominous reality of his dream.

‘It is a sign,’ he muttered again and again, ‘a sign! I shall die violently, with my blood gushing from me. . . .’

When morning came he broke his fast frugally, alone with Fitz-Hamon. Then he shouted for a scribe, and entered the hall. It was full of the purest, gayest sunlight ; and his guests, laughing and care-free, were making ready for the day’s hunt. Ralph of Aix alone was moody, with sombre, restless eyes.

‘I shall not hunt to-day,’ the King announced into the hush that followed his entrance. ‘Where is that scribe?’ he roared with an oath, and, drawing up a stool, he sat impatiently at the table.

He was once more his arrogant, foul-mouthed self.

The scribe entered in a hurry, breathing a little heavily, but whether from haste or fear, or both, was not discernible : the result was the same. At a quick sign from the King he sat to the table and produced his writing-materials from a leather case hanging at his girdle. Though he was monklike in garb, he was not an ecclesiastic. His hood was thrown back from his head, and he was not tonsured.

The King at once began to transact business, shrewdly and

dominantly. The others moved to the farther end of the long, beamed hall, and stood conversing in subdued tones. From time to time the King glanced at them. After a while he finished his listening to the scribe's reading of documents and paused in the dictation of his replies, and gave a deep-throated laugh.

'Be not so glum, my friends,' he called. 'We will hunt nevertheless.'

Fitz-Hamon turned in surprise, and seemed about to remonstrate, but his master looked at him with a frown and curtly bade him order the horses and dogs to be in immediate readiness. Fitz-Hamon left the hall with an uneasy countenance. He glanced swiftly at Ralph of Aix as he passed him, but there was no answering gleam in the mercenary's eyes. Meanwhile the King had turned again to his business.

He was still sitting, so engaged, when there was a clatter as of small hooves in the courtyard, and a murmur of voices.

William lifted his head impatiently. Tyrell, who was at the window, answered the unspoken question :

'It is a monk, my lord, on a mule. The beast is very exhausted. They must have come a great way.'

'A monk?' repeated the King contemptuously. 'What can a monk want here?' He shrugged his shoulders. 'Another emissary from the pestilent Anselm? Face of Luke, but I cannot stomach these ecclesiastics who are for ever belabouring us in the name of an old myth!'

He frowned fiercely, shrugged again, and returned with a blasphemous growl to dictating to the scribe. Presently Fitz-Hamon re-entered. His face was pale. He carried in his hand a roll of parchment fastened round with green silk, and bearing a small ecclesiastical oval seal within a green and armorially worked bag.

'There has come a monk, my lord,' he said, 'from . . .'

'Oversea from that exiled thorn in my flesh, Anselm?' William cried angrily. 'I will hear nothing from Anselm. Bid him at once begone—and to take his scroll with him!'

'He has not come from the Archbishop, my lord, but from the Abbot of Gloucester. He has ridden in haste and brings this letter from the Abbot. He says it is important.'

'From Abbot Serlo?' muttered the King, and took the scroll doubtfully. 'Know you anything of its contents?'

‘Nothing, my lord, except what the monk tells : that it relates to a vision.’

‘A vision ?’ scornfully cried Rufus. ‘What has a vision to do with me ?’

Then he remembered his own dream, and began fingering the scroll with a moody petulance.

‘The monk tells, too,’ went on Fitz-Hamon in a low, awed voice, ‘that there are strangest signs and wonders in the land.’

The King looked at him sharply, interrogatively, with eyes that gloomed rather than shone.

‘What signs, what wonders ?’ he asked, and his utterance was thick.

‘The great pool at Finchamstead for some days has been welling blood.’

‘Blood . . . blood . . .’ muttered William. ‘It is always in blood that these omens come.’

‘Your cousin, the Count of Mortain,’ went on Fitz-Hamon, ‘so this monk also tells, was hunting in a forest in Cornwall and had shot his last arrow when a huge black goat crossed his path, and riding the goat was a red man, naked and crowned, with a deep wound in his breast, and even as the Count looked upon it, the sight vanished. All this the monk reports as known far and wide.’

‘My cousin was ever a speaker of wildness in his cups,’ answered William in contempt. ‘I trust that the Abbot of Gloucester writes of a more dependable matter.’

Again he doubtfully fingered the scroll, then tossed it on a sudden into the lap of the scribe.

‘I am no “beau clerk” as my brother Henry,’ he said satirically. ‘Open it, and read, fellow.’

The scribe unfastened the scroll with trembling fingers, hastily gathered the tenour of its contents, glanced up sharply at his watching master, then began to read in high-pitched, nasal tones :

“From Serlo, Abbot of Gloucester, to my lord the King ; in the name of Christ, greeting and benediction ! Many the verities unfolded to us in mysterious ways, and God in His lovingkindness at divers times has shown truth’s naked face in a vision. The wise man will heed the signs that are vouchsafed, while the mocker will perish prematurely, without time to make his peace. Wherefore I have thought it my duty to set down in writing a vision vouchsafed to an old monk in the House of Saint Peter here in Gloucester



this night, and to send it to my lord the King with the utmost speed of a man's travel. Thus, as in a trance, he saw : He was kneeling within a lofty minster at prayer, and the walls of the minster were hung with velvet and purple, woven as by the skill of the Greeks, and with tapestries in whose stitchwork lived again great deeds of heroes and saints ; and there were illuminated books, and shrines for sacred bones, gleaming with gold and jewels. He covered his face from the temptation of their beauty, and prayed ; and when, after he had prayed, he released his eyes from his locked fingers, all that splendour had vanished away. Nothing remained but the barest altar that ever he had seen ; and upon the altar lay the naked form of a man, yet of one greater than a man. Again he hid his eyes, this time from fear, and when he dared to look again, behold, he saw thyself, my lord, striding up the long aisle of that minster, and he saw thee go to the altar, and gaze down upon the form outstretched upon it, and there was a golden shimmer about the body. Then, as it seemed, a cannibal desire took hold of thee, and thou didst strive hungrily to partake of that gleaming Flesh, which patiently endured it, until suddenly the face, that had been as gentle as an angel's, became stern and forbidding, and the victim of thy desire spoke : ' Is it not enough that thou hast always grieved me with wrongs upon wrongs ? Thinkest thou to gnaw my very flesh and very brain ? Hence ! Thou shalt not eat of me. A day, and a night, and a day again, and thou shalt eat no more—unless, this side of Hell, thou repent of thy sins against my Church ! ' When he had so spoken, the minster was as struck with levin-fires, and the monk woke from his trance in the sweat of fear and awe. All this, in the name of God, I have thought fit to recount to my lord the King, that he may profit from the sign, and repent, and by that repentance, the only surety, escape the death that cometh to all heedless men like an arrow out of a bush. These, to my lord the King, from the House of Saint Peter in Gloucester, whereof I am Abbot."

There was a hush for a moment after the scribe had finished reading. Then the hall was filled with the King's bitter laugh. The others, courtierlike, laughed with him, until the expression on his flushed countenance struck the hilarity from their lips as with the blow of a gauntlet. William turned satirically to Tyrell.

' Walter, my "gabber,"' he said, 'lest you be counted as lazy a boaster as your liege-lord, do justice on these things you have heard !'

‘Why, so I will, my lord,’ was the answer, ‘if the Devil aid me—for no other but he can bring to heel an imperial sinner!’ And he lifted his head delicately, and lightly laughed through closed teeth.

As his laughter died away, the noise of horses and dogs was heard in the courtyard. All was ready for the day’s hunting.

William leapt to his feet.

‘Give the monk a hundred shillings for his journey,’ he said to Fitz-Hamon with a gesture of careless magnificence. ‘Come,’ he cried to the others, ‘there is still a deer to start.’

‘No, no, my lord!’ burst out Fitz-Hamon, daring to catch hold of his master’s arm. ‘Hunt not to-day!’

‘Because of a snorer’s dream?’ answered the King, and flung off his favourite’s hand with an oath. ‘I wonder at my Lord Serlo’s fancy for setting down the indigestion of a monkish loon! I always took him to be a wise old Abbot, but it is very simple of him, when I am so pressed with planning my campaign in France, to take pains to write down the dream of a doddering monk and to send it across England with the utmost speed of a poor monastery mule. Does he think that I am as the English, who will forgo a journey or any of their business because of some wild word of an alehouse wise-woman? Let go of my sleeve, Robert! Hunt to-day I will, by the face of Luke!’

“A day, and a night, and a day again,” answered Fitz-Hamon, ‘and that, my lord, is to-day. Chance is a beggar, and Opportunity the almsgiver. Do not hunt this one day, sire, for the love of God!’

The King’s bluster had but ill-covered his unease; his dream, too, was yet vividly with him. As he looked into the faces of his companions, one by one, and marked how each man, not excepting even Tyrell, was murmuring in agreement with Fitz-Hamon’s persistence, he allowed his pride to be persuaded, shrugged his shoulders, and gave orders for the dogs and horses to be taken back to kennel and stall.

Once again the King immersed himself in business, dismissing his friends awhile to their own affairs. Tyrell and Ralph of Aix went out from the hall side by side. In the courtyard, which was golden with that peculiarly limpid sunlight that so often follows after storm, they came upon Adeliz Tyrell and the wife of Gilbert de l’Aigle, pacing slowly up and down within the shade of a wall in feminine converse, and laughing together from time to time.

‘What deceitful wantons are women!’ thought Ralph. ‘I cannot laugh, I cannot converse gaily and emptily, with these thoughts of love and adventure burning my breast.’ And he had his first glimpse of man’s snaky path in the disillusioning wilderness of enamourment.

In no mood to be a gossip he bowed and passed on in the direction of the stables. Adeliz watched his going with an amused pucker, and her husband laughed.

‘Our fierce Ralph,’ he said, giving her a straight glance in the eyes, ‘is no soft besieger. He cannot even woo a fortress, but must make his assault at once—or not at all. Which is to say,’ he continued, turning to Edith de l’Aigle, ‘that he is no woman’s favourite falcon!’

‘After your description of him,’ that lady replied, ‘I should have said that beyond all challenge he must be, else I do not know my own sex—or you do not!’ she added with a smile.

The morning passed without further event until the time of the customary early meal, which was taken at noon. The King by then had recovered his normal mood, and he and his companions ate in gaiety, though his humour was no less boastful in temper, no less blasphemous in expression. Nevertheless, at the meal’s end, having drunk rather more than was usual with him—perhaps to drown his darker imaginations—he had regained his spirits and was listening with some complacency to William de Breteuil’s and Gilbert de Clare’s ambitious flattery of the potential emperor; and neither at the meal nor after it was any attempt made to ‘gab.’ As by common consent between King and liegemen that hazardous recreation was warily eschewed.

Presently the King called for his boots.

‘If I may not hunt,’ he said, ‘I can walk, I hope, to the kennels. I grow fat.’

‘Cæsar was a lean man,’ murmured Tyrell underbreath, ‘but not Pepin the Unmighty.’

While his body-servant was helping the King to draw on his boots, one of the huntsmen entered, approached Ralph of Aix, and whispered in his ear.

‘By my faith, I had forgotten!’ answered the mercenary. ‘Where is he?’

‘Just without, sir.’

‘Hold him a moment, and I will come.’

The huntsman departed. Sir Ralph crossed over to the King.

'My lord,' he began with soldierly directness, and told of his promise to the smith of Brockenhurst.

'Let me see these fine arrows,' William commanded. 'Bring him in.'

Ralph of Aix strode over to the archway and looked forth. The smith was standing between two of the King's guard. The mercenary beckoned, and the smith was thrust into the hall by the two men-at-arms without ceremony.

'Come hither,' said William. 'Do not be afraid of my soldiers. They are rough men, but I am a knight, sworn to a Christian spirit.'

He guffawed as at a great jest. The smith shambled forward, dully, imperturbably.

'I hear you have wrought six fine arrows,' the King went on.

The smith bowed, and awkwardly held them out in a sheaf.

'One at a time, fellow, one at a time,' cried Rufus impatiently.

'One will be enough for the business,' said the smith with a strange, deprecatory leer as he chose one of his arrows and handed it to the King.

William examined it carefully, poised it, ran his finger along it, tossed it in the air and caught it again, and laid it behind him on the table. One by one, he examined the others in the same way, silently, deftly, knowledgeably.

'What is their price?' he asked. 'They are good arrows.'

'You will never have seen better, Sir King,' said the smith, his eyes hot in his swarthy face. 'Will not my lord accept them?'

'Accept them?' cried William in surprise. 'Does a churl give to a prince?' he went on in a flurry of anger, then suddenly checked his haughtiness with a laugh.

'Well, if I were cold, I would accept fire from the Devil,' he said, 'so why not, in my need, a sheaf of arrows from a good craftsman?'

'Why not, in sooth, my lord?' answered the smith with a curious smile. 'I can promise you a great hunt with them this day.'

'I am not hunting to-day,' said the King shortly. 'Give to this fellow, Robert, the same sum that I gave to the monk—not in payment,' he added, 'but gift for gift as is the way between men who understand one another.'

The smith bowed lurchingly, and his dark face had glowed.

'Though you do not hunt to-day, Sir King,' he answered, 'you will to-morrow. Such arrows cry for employment; I marvel, indeed, that you can keep them from the bow to-day.'

‘And, by God, that will I not!’ cried William suddenly. ‘Summon again the horses and dogs, Robert. Friends, what is superstition but a maudlin fear of prophecy, and prophecy is only the vapouring of any epileptic. What, then, is there to fear? We will hunt, I say. Hear ye? We will go hunt. I thank you, smith, for your fine arrows. They shall be fleshed to-day in a goodly hide, I can promise them.’

He broke off, and made for the archway to go forth. Tyrell, in his way, drew back for him to pass. The King paused. There was a sardonic grimace on his countenance. Without apparent predecision, he suddenly handed two of the arrows to the astonished Lord of Poix.

‘It is fitting,’ said the King, ‘that the sharpest arrows should be given to him who knows how to deal such deadly strokes with his tongue. It will be a good sight to see how the deer fare when you “gab” with *them*!’

Tyrell took the arrows with a surprised awkwardness, and flushed.

‘I am honoured, sire,’ he murmured, and bowed low.

But the King did not hear, for he had already stridden forth.

Ralph of Aix paused awhile to speak to the smith before following the others.

‘Are you satisfied?’ he asked with a brusque, almost harsh, familiarity.

The smith nodded. The mask of his face was set for the moment in simpler lines, as though the King’s acceptance of his gift had smoothed out some fold of psychological irritation.

The mercenary turned on his heel to go, but swung back after a bare pace or two, and grasped the smith by the arm.

‘Tell me,’ he demanded in a whisper, ‘are your arrows unlike any others? Recognisable, ha?’

‘There are none like them; a fool’s eye could pick them out after a shower as dense as the last rain at Senlac!’

‘Good; I understand,’ replied the mercenary in his usual tones.

‘Good,’ he repeated, and hurried out.

The smith stood where he had been left. His mask was so fixed in a smile that the smile itself ceased to be expressive; the life proper to it seemed clear as beneath a thin transparency of ice. His gaze also was fixed, but as though expectant of a vision rather than as beholding one, until the gaze, too, seemed inexpressive.

An attendant came in whose office was plain. Without a word

the smith received the King's gift of certain shillings, and then was conducted forth. As he emerged into the courtyard the King was mounting his horse, a magnificent black of pure strain. Fitz-Hamon, at the stirrup, was vehemently expostulating against his hardihood in the face of so many omens, but William cursed him for a woman, and set spurs to his beast—and the cavalcade of hunters, with the hounds in an eager cluster, followed him out towards the forest. Fitz-Hamon, his face pale and set, mounted and cantered moodily after them.

The smith ambled along the same road for a little way, but when they disappeared down the nearest glade he continued straight on towards Brockenhurst and his smithy. He seemed in no hurry, and walked rather like a ploughman at the close of a long day's ploughing, not idly for all his slowness of gait, but as with the consciousness that his bout of work had come satisfactorily to an end.

Once in the forest, the hunters scattered as was their wont, Walter Tyrell and Ralph of Aix remaining nearest to the King. After the storm, even though it had not broken overhead but had passed in the distance, the air was lighter and the day more limpid. Joyously the birds sang and twittered, as in unconscious irony that beneath them the hunt was up—for the pleasure of men at the expense of creatures as helpless against man's cruelty as themselves.

Fortune did not favour their hunting that afternoon, and William Rufus grew ever more stormily impatient as the hot hours passed fruitlessly by. He did not converse with his companions, but seemed to ride in that dread aloofness popularly attributed to kings and yet rarely exhibited by them in reality.

The mercenary and Tyrell rode likewise in silence, partly out of obedience to the royal mood and partly because each of them had much need for private meditation. Tyrell feared that his daring in the 'gab' had galled his master more than the privilege of that game should have allowed, and he feared loss of favour and all the other losses that inevitably go with it, but the Frenchman in him had been nettled by William's boasting almost beyond endurance: to see France an appendage to any empire whose confederate states was headed by England would be past bearing. For his part, Ralph of Aix was turning over in his mind the various inconveniences of exile and the dubious search after other employment for his sword. If only there were no Tyrell. . . . He was not particularly perturbed at the thought of losing William's favour;

there were other kings in the world. There was even William's own brother—but which brother? Robert, the elder, was away at the crusade; but Henry the Good Clerk was a man of kingly imagination. It might be he who would succeed in England. Count Henry had always dealt with him as one gentleman with another, and he would be a pleasanter master than the grim and foul-mouthed William. 'Were but Count Henry to be King Henry,' went on the mercenary's thoughts, 'I should have a finer life here than seeking employment from one prince and another through France and Italy—even with the lovely Adeliz at my side.'

He rode on moodily, almost as moodily as the King himself—though the King's moodiness was one of smoulder, and Ralph's one of flame.

As though coming pat with the mercenary's thoughts there sounded suddenly in another part of the forest the note of a hunting-horn of a certain recognisable pitch.

'My brother the Beauclerk,' muttered William through his teeth. 'And may the Devil give him a worse hunting than mine!'

'Or a better kill!' murmured Ralph to himself, and he turned with a faint, Italianate smile to Tyrell.

'My new gauntlets to your baldrick there,' he said, 'that we start no deer, nor test the smith of Brockenhurst's arrows this day!'

'That is very like,' responded Tyrell, 'and I take not your wager, Ralph. There is little of the day left, too. See, it is nearly sunset already. He will not have the stomach to hunt without luck much longer,' he added, nodding towards the King, riding some few yards in front.

'He will be wroth at not testing his new arrows,' laughed the mercenary. 'You were in favour, indeed, to be given two of them.'

'Is it favour to be given gifts with sarcasm and out of spite over being worsted at wit?'

Tyrell's tone betrayed that his irritation was still red ash susceptible to the bellows.

'Let me see one of the arrows,' said Ralph. 'I looked at them but very hastily yesterday.'

'They are good arrows,' replied Tyrell indifferently as he drew one of them from the quiver hanging at his saddle and gave it into the mercenary's extended hand.

Ralph of Aix carefully examined it in silence, then returned it with an assessing nod.

'He is a smith of smiths, this fellow of Brockenhurst,' he said.

As Tyrell replaced the arrow in the quiver his companion checked his horse for a moment, and when he rode forward again he came up on Tyrell's other side—the quiver side of him.

At that instant the King stretched out his arm and reined in his horse. They pulled up a few yards behind him, waiting. The King dismounted, motioning them to do the same. Presently all three of them stood perfectly still, as though sentinels of the falling twilight, watching a patch of clear glade. The King's dogs had passed out of sight.

Ralph of Aix was standing nearer to Tyrell's horse than to his own. They were behind an aspen and near to an elder tree.

On a sudden, with an expression of fierce joy on his face, the King fitted one of the smith's arrows to his bow. Tyrell plucked from his quiver the first arrow that came to his hand. It was one of his own. Ralph of Aix drew stealthily from the same quiver one of the two arrows given to Tyrell by the King. With their arrows fitted to their bows, the three men waited, intense and vigilant.

A single bark came to their ears, and a noise of disturbed undergrowth. Almost at the same moment a magnificent stag leapt out into the glade ahead of them.

Through chance, or ill luck, or else by reason of his impatient vehemence, the string of William's bow broke as he pulled it.

'Shoot!' he cried out in his excitement. 'Shoot in the Devil's name, or you shall both find it the worse for you! Will you lose me the stag, sluggards?'

Tyrell and Ralph of Aix shot in the same instant. The arrow of Tyrell, hastily and nervously aimed, caught the trunk of an oak, glancing off to be lost for ever in the tangled and brushy underwood; but the mercenary's, very carefully aimed, pierced the King full in the breast.

Both men rushed forward to the stricken monarch and knelt beside him where he had fallen. In his agony the King had caught at the arrow with his hands, snapping off the shaft of it at the wound. When they reached him he was already dead.

'Look, it is your arrow!' said Ralph to the horrified Tyrell.

'But I thought,' stammered the Lord of Poix, 'that I shot with one of my usual arrows. . . .'

'No,' answered the mercenary, shaking his head. 'See, it is one of the two he gave you. Besides, I saw you fit it to your bowstring.'



Tyrell covered his face with his hands.

'They will say that I did it of purpose and from malice. That "gab" will damn me! They will remember it, every word,' he whispered hoarsely, and when he lifted his countenance again to his companion it was white and drawn.

'Fly!' urged Ralph instantly. 'It is your only chance of life. At once! I will shield your going. This cannot be hidden long.'

'But, Adeliz . . .' began Tyrell.

'Fly, man, fly, while there is time!' insisted Ralph. 'I will tell your wife. Cross oversea at once. Make westward at the coast. You will find a fisher boat in any small harbour. Once in France, you are safe.'

'Tell Adeliz that I shall make for my own castle at Poix. Tell her to come to me there.'

'Yes, yes,' replied the mercenary. 'Rely on me. Mount and fly!'

Tyrell gazed down at the dead King. He was shaken at what supposedly he had done, and was nearly hysterical.

'He was a blasphemer,' he muttered hoarsely, 'and died in his sins without Christ's body!'

Hastily he plucked some wild flowers and leaves, and knelt and thrust them into the King's open mouth, muttering the while the immemorial Latin of the Sacrament, trembling and incoherent.

'Here is your horse, man!' cried Ralph, bringing up his companion's animal. 'Mount—and go!'

Without further word—and no handclasp was offered by the mercenary—Tyrell leapt upon his horse and galloped away, swaying drunkenly in his saddle, down the dimming drove of the forest.

After his going, the mercenary's first act was to recall the King's two hounds, his favourites, from still seeking the escaped stag. They came back at his whistle, with lolling tongues, checked suddenly, sniffed at their master's body and shied away, then, sitting on their haunches, began a curious whimpering that flamed up at intervals into a strange, eerie howling.

Presently, when he judged the fugitive might be a full mile away, Sir Ralph took the dead King's hunting-horn, blew an imperious, summoning blast, and waited.

In the darkening twilight the forest rustled as with unnameable and terrible presences—though the most terrible Presence of all, one but too nameable, had, indeed, been and passed. But the dogs, scenting it still, howled on intermittently, uncomforted.

When, with the King's body in their midst, covered with a rough horse-cloth and borne on a rustic wain, the hunting-party returned to the lodge, the news of the event was already known, spread by the huntsman who had fetched the wain from the nearest farmstead. Sir Ralph, therefore, had nothing to communicate to Adeliz Tyrell—though much to withhold from her!—beyond the plans, not of her husband but of himself.

'He will be a hunted man, Adeliz, wherever he may go henceforth. Slayers of kings live not long. There is no need of exile for us now. A little while, and the vengeance of justice will set you free of him. And then . . .'

He touched the long sleeve of her gown tenderly, smiling into her face. They were standing in the open hall of the hunting-lodge, and were alone.

'Whither has he fled?' she asked. 'Did he tell you?'

'No,' he lied. 'He just rode swiftly away. He knew himself for a doomed man. He fled wisely,' he added as in grim judgment. 'There had been quarrel and provocation—all of us would have to bear witness to that—and though, as I believe, it was an accident, his arrow being deflected by a tree, the evidence for malice and premeditation would be too strong even for innocence to counter. It was his arrow, too,' he went on. 'There can be no question of that. He had two of them only: we all saw the King give them to him. And one of those two was still in his quiver—and one in the King's body! No, to fly was the only chance; and that, indeed, is no chance,' he concluded, shrugging his shoulders. 'He might be safe in Barbary, but hardly in all Christendom.'

'My poor Walter . . .' she murmured.

Her face was pale and set. It was almost as though it had suddenly thinned.

'Sent he no message to me?' she asked.

He lied again, shaking his head.

'No,' he repeated, and took her hand. 'Adeliz,' he went on, 'an outlaw has no rights—hardly, indeed, those of burial. And those of marriage?'

He paused, and gazed at her intently.

'With a King's favour—and I look for Count Henry to be the next King here in England—much may be compassed when a woman's husband is under the very ban itself. We may not have to wait even for so long as he may be let live by justice.'

'Whither was he making?' she asked tonelessly.

'Have I not said that I do not know?' he answered with impatience. 'He was wiser than to reveal what is torturable out of a man.'

'He would have told you,' she replied simply. 'You have lied to me. He would not have ridden away without some word sent to me. I know Walter, if you do not.'

He asseverated gruffly that he knew nothing more than he had told.

She shook her head gently, mournfully.

'He will cross the seas; that at least is sure,' she mused aloud. 'And, once in France, there is Poix,' she added, and looked at the mercenary sharply. But his countenance was disciplined, and there was nothing to be read upon it.

'I shall go to Poix,' she went on. 'Either I shall find him there—or, soon or late, he will there find *me*.'

He looked at her aghast.

'But, Adeliz . . .' he began.

'I shall set out for Poix as early to-morrow as I may,' she interrupted. 'Do not look at me so. Do not speak. There is nothing to be said. It has befallen thus, and we must abide it.'

'What are you saying?' he cried roughly. 'This is a madness. We are lovers. What is he to you—what has he ever been to you—that you should go to him now in his outlawry?'

'He was always kind to me; I have told you that. And when he saw that I did not love him, he might have been so harsh. We are lovers, yes, my dear,' she said, 'and I could have left him for you in his prosperity, but in his misfortune, no.'

'I cannot believe this,' he muttered. 'It is a dream. You are playing with me.'

'Do I look as though I were playing with you, or with myself, or with life?' she asked, and lifted her face proudly. He saw it to be stained with ceaseless tears.

He put his strong arms about her possessively; she lay in his clasp limp and unresponsive. He took her chin in one hand, and drew her lips to his own, kissing her with hungry ardour, but there was no answering passion in their touch, nor even so much as the reluctant automatism of detached acceptance.

His uneasy temper began to flame.

'Do you mean that?' he demanded curtly.

'Yes, Ralph.'

'Mother of God,' he burst out, 'so what the minstrels sing is

true: that a woman is the most changeable creature under the sun and will house nothing in her heart for longer than a whim's moment !'

'Ralph, Ralph,' she begged, 'do you take this as easy for me ? Can no man ever recognise a breaking heart ?' she added bitterly, and drew away from him.

His natural soldierly decisiveness prompted his answer :

'If this is the end, be it the end ! I shall never trust woman more—nor do aught again in my life for a woman's sake ! Farewell !'

Both were disillusioned : he, manlike, angrily ; she, womanlike, injuredly. They would keep no good memories of their last hour together.

As he turned away and strode out of the hall a single horseman rode into the courtyard. It was Count Henry, the dead King's younger brother. His demeanour showed that he had heard the news.

The mercenary hurried to his side.

'Do not dismount, my lord,' he said.

Henry looked down at him from the saddle in surprise.

'Ride at once for Winchester,' whispered Ralph.

His own horse was standing, still caparisoned, in the courtyard. He whistled the animal across to him, and immediately mounted.

'What does this mean, Sir Ralph ?' asked Henry.

'Would you have your brother Robert made King ?' answered the mercenary. 'He is away on the crusade. This is your chance. William de Breteuil—and let me speak in haste, my lord, for here he comes to speak with you !—would proclaim Robert of Normandy this very night. Doubtless he has eyes on the regency till Duke Robert comes home ! But, my lord, ride with me to Winchester at once. The treasury of England is at Winchester. He who has the money has the power. . . . My free-lances are at Winchester, too, and at your service . . . sire !'

One look passed between prince and hireling, and before de Breteuil could stride up to them across the courtyard they were already galloping away into the night.

The dead King's two favourite dogs were missing from the kennel until the moon had travelled nearly half of its nocturnal journey, and then they came home, exhausted, dusty, and stained about the jaws with blood. What deer had they been secretly savaging, wondered the Chief Huntsman, and gave them a whip-

ping, hoping that it was not the beginning in them of unsporting vice, for they were good dogs even for those royally bred. But at dawn there was a discovery in Brockenhurst: the smith was found lying across the threshold of his forge, and his throat had been torn out—by a wolf, it was popularly supposed. And there grew a tale, likewise, of a ditcher who looked too closely at one of the dead smith's feet, and found it, he averred, not as that of a man. But the ditcher was a fellow who had always been notoriously loose in his wits.

### THE GRANDFATHER.

HE hears their footsteps pattering  
Behind him, down the lane.  
He hears their voices whispering  
And laughing in the rain.  
He feels their small hands lingering  
Within his own again.

But only leaves are following.  
The leafless branches sway.  
And wind and rain are murmuring  
Small secrets, night and day,  
And twilight shadows hovering  
Where sunbeams used to play.

Life now is just *remembering*.  
The children all are gone ;  
Married, or dead, or wandering.  
Not one remains, not one.  
Soon night will find him slumbering,  
Life's lonesome all alone.

But moon and stars are silvering  
The watching trees outside,  
Where radiant wings are shimmering  
Above death's rising tide,  
Beyond the trees, Dawn glimmering  
And new doors opening wide.

C. M. MALLET.

## *AN AUTUMN DAY AMONG THE BIRDS.*

BY J. M. CRASTER.

SUCH a heading will almost certainly conjure up a variety of memories in the minds of different people. To the sportsman it recalls happy times in pursuit of our native Red Grouse, long days spent amid the unrivalled glories of Bonny Scotland; and whether seated in well-screened butt, walking in line with beaters or following the ranging setter, the day in question is wellnigh certain to linger long in the memory of him who is capable of appreciating the countless beauties which Nature distributes with such lavish hand.

To the wildfowler the same sentence smacks of the foreshore and the mud-flats. Warm drowsy days spent beside his favourite element, when the sand-bar shimmers in the September sunshine, the tiny ripples upon the golden sand are hardly sufficient to disturb the placid surface of the flood-tide, and the air is filled with the sharp and excited cries of the terns busily engaged in preying upon sand-eel shoals in the bay. True, the conditions are far removed indeed from those typical of the real wildfowling season, when the bitter nor'easter whips the sea, and the snow flurries whiten the dead seaweed at the tide-line; or when the moon appears to signal some Morse message to the ice-bound shore, as the scurrying storm wrack alternately releases and obscures her pale and ghostly light. Many is the keen wildfowler, however, who yearns to be among that desolate collection of sea, mud and bent-grass once more, and so pays an early visit to his beloved 'slakes'; knowing full well that an odd chance at an occasional home-bred mallard is the most that he can expect, but quite content to spend many a happy hour watching the countless 'waders,' and filling his ears with their varied and musical call notes.

Having thus mentioned two possibilities under the same heading, shall we decide to take full advantage of the long autumn day, and spend part of it upon the shore, and part inland, where a different type of avian population is to be found? Let the site of our prospective expedition be in Northumberland, and then no magic carpet will be needed to transport us from one venue to the other, since in this favoured corner of the 'North Countrie' both agri-

cultural land, moor and sea-shore are to be found very nearly within a Sabbath Day's Journey.

Assuming then that weather conditions are perfect—and this assumption needs little poetic licence for the majority of September days in the North—the following questions naturally arise: (1) What period of time shall we describe under the title 'day'; and (2) In what order are we to take our three different localities? The first is easily answered, for the particular day in question must be a real one, that is to say from dawn till dark; only thus can we make sure that none of the treats in store for us will be missed. With regard to question number two, a little more consideration is necessary before the answer is decided, but the following will probably be found to give the best results: begin on the shore, continue a little distance removed from the murmur of the waves, and bid *au revoir* to the sun as he drops behind the rounded top of 'Muckle Cheviot.'

Without more ado then, this day of days (we hope) shall begin upon the shore at dawn. Here it might be as well to make quite clear the difference between dawn and sunrise, for the former occurs roughly one hour before the latter, and its arrival is denoted by the first streaks of very pale green which gradually climb out of the sea from the general direction—at this time of year—of north-east. By the time sunrise is upon us, we shall feel that we have already spent half the space of a normal day, so many sights and sounds will have been vouchsafed to us during these wonderful sixty minutes.

As every ornithologist knows, September is the great month for all avian activity upon the shore. Summer migrants are still to be seen in fair numbers, although some of them may have already departed for the south. The earliest of the winter visitors, many or few according to the lateness or earliness of the season, have already taken up residence in their winter home; while the countless hordes of passage migrants are passing day by day and almost hour by hour, some staying only for what may with truth be described as a flying visit; others, for no apparent reason, finding conditions so much to their liking that they remain here for the whole winter. This last is a very curious and interesting fact, and one worthy of especial note. Why is it that in the case of such wading birds as the knot and the bar-tailed godwit, in every thousand or so which stay for but a few hours or a single day, one individual prefers to settle down for several months with us; and is prepared to brave the worst conditions our winter can provide,

rather than to depart with its companions upon the final stages of their journey to the warmth and ease of Spain or Africa? Is it that the food supply upon a certain area of ooze is insufficient to nourish more than a minute proportion of visitors for any length of time, and do they draw lots for who shall stay and who must go? Is it simply a question of the hardihood of the individual, so that a very few know themselves to be capable of thriving upon our coast throughout the colder months; even as some human beings appear impervious to weather conditions, while others must wear flannel next their skin? Or can the explanation be that those birds which remain behind are some which have been more pulled down in condition and vitality by the trials of the nesting season than the majority, and which therefore feel unable to cope with the long and perilous journey ahead of them? Still a fourth possibility, though a rather unlikely one: are the particular birds which stay behind for this winter descended from parents which performed the same hardy feat in the previous year, and which have thus bred a type of 'resident-migrant'?

All these questions, and many others also, are problems for bird lovers of a scientific turn of mind; sufficient for us upon this occasion to be truly grateful for the fact that certain individuals of a migratory group do decide to remain behind, and thereby give us the delight of listening to and of watching them.

This day will have been chosen so that dawn coincides more or less with the time of low water; on the north-east coast, therefore, we get the admirable combination of dawn, low tide and a moon just past the full. This means that as our car glides down the last quarter-mile or so to the edge of the slake, with the engine cut off and only the side lights showing—to avoid any unnecessary disturbance to the creatures of the night—the huge expanse of wet sand and mud lies naked and exposed beneath the silvery rays of the lunar spot-light. How different the scene appears by this illumination than it does under the glaring and merciless beams of the midday sun. Then all the unpleasantness of the mud seems to be magnified, everything appears rigidly outlined, harsh and sharp to offensiveness. Now, however, beneath this well-modulated and beautiful radiance, all the good points of the scene are stressed and its disadvantages are reduced. The sharp corners are rounded off, and the panorama is bewitched under the influence of the white-robed Lady of the Night, and the misty and entrancing rays which only she can produce.



Our eyes having received their foretaste of the joys to come, as we leave the car and slowly advance across the shingle it is the turn of our ears. Quietly as the feet fall upon the stones—quietly that is from the human standpoint—our approach to their roosting quarters is too much for the peace of mind and for the temper of the curlew flock. These wide-awake and wary gentry at once give tongue in no uncertain manner, and announce to all and sundry that unauthorised visitors have appeared upon the scene. Could we but understand curlew language, we might learn something about ourselves and our habits which would be a revelation to us all! Certainly the watchmen of the shore are the curlew and the redshank. Both appear ever on the alert for the slightest opportunity of warning the other denizens of the beach of the arrival of anything or anyone of whom they disapprove, and both utter their warnings at the top of their voices and in the shrillest manner.

When our ear-drums have recovered from the rude shock administered to them by the vociferous complaint of the curlews, they are enabled to pick up a very much more subdued note, the plaintive and rather minor-keyed whistle of the ringed plover. This, one of the smallest of the commoner waders, never collects in large flocks as do dunlin and knot, yet there are few areas of sand or mud on this coast from which the species is absent. They breed in small numbers upon the adjacent Farne Islands, and are among the very few varieties which can enter the nesting colonies of the Arctic terns and remain unmolested. No shore bird is more difficult to pick out when at rest upon the mud, so well does its rather indefinite colouring fade into the background; and when on the move as a pedestrian, its tiny legs move so rapidly as to lose their separate identity and to appear simply as a sort of twinkling blur.

On reaching a suitable place to sit down and await what the gradually increasing light has to show us, we can pick out a number of interesting, and in some cases thrilling, sounds. Now that the near-by curlews have announced our arrival and have departed to distant and more secluded positions, others of the same species can be heard giving an excellent imitation of their own lovely bubbling spring call. This is uttered on and off throughout the year upon the slakes, but it is only in the nesting season and when the birds are paired, that the delicious call is accompanied by the no less attractive hovering and gliding spring flight.

From a considerable distance comes the very characteristic

'peep' of oyster catchers, where these handsome pied waders are discussing the day's prospects upon the mussel-bed from which, when the light increases, they intend to obtain their breakfast. What trim smart-looking birds they are, and yet what deplorable taste they show in the choice of colour for their extremities—pink legs and an orange beak! In full daylight, and when flying directly towards the observer, their resemblance to wigeon is remarkable.

Three other sounds are almost sure to accompany the foregoing : quacking of mallard, whistling of cock wigeon (why not drake wigeon, only the wildfowler can explain !) and the varied 'talk' of the grey geese.

Mallard are looked upon by many people as inland duck, pure and simple. While the great majority of this species certainly are seen more or less all the year round on rivers, ponds and lochs, these are the large resident duck. There is a regular influx of winter visitors—far-northern breeders—which arrive on our shores wherever the coastal formation suits them, and which copy the habits of the migratory wigeon ; feed with them upon the *Zostera*-covered mud-flats by night, and roost with them by day upon the sea itself, but often a mere hundred yards or so from the shore.

Wild duck vary greatly in their conversation ; in the case of teal, the drake whistles and the duck quacks, the cock wigeon whistles while his mate growls, whereas both sexes of mallard quack, the drake's note sounding well modulated and refined, and the lady's (or should it be 'lidy's' ?) is high-pitched, harsh, loud and strident.

The whistle of the cock wigeon is very clear and carries a long way, but the growl of the hen must be heard near to, and then rather resembles the talk of the nesting guillemot upon the Pinnacles.

If the morning is very still, and sound travels far, it is often quite possible for those of keen hearing to catch the noise of ducks' bills dabbling in the mud ; a curious but unmistakable kind of slobbering gobble, as the owners of the bills either make haste to secure a few more mouthfuls of the tempting wigeon grass (*Zostera marina*) before the increasing light warns them that it is time once more to seek the security of the open sea, or else denoting the fact that the birds are busily washing their bills free of the mud at the conclusion of their meal.

Last but by no means least, we may be fortunate enough to find a few early grey geese upon the same stretch of shore. They will quite possibly have roosted upon the sand-bar, or even fed during some part of the night ; for these big birds, although usually

diurnal feeders, do not object to slipping in an extra meal when the moon's rays are sufficiently strong to shed good light upon their dining-room table. Indeed, on a clear night and with the moon near the full, it needs no great stretch of the imagination to see a resemblance between the slake and a huge banqueting-table. The lunar rays give the dark-grey mud an attractive whitish sheen, the tiny runnels of water, whether salt or fresh, appear as threads of quicksilver, and might well be Nature's idea of table decoration ; while there is certainly no lack of guests at her hospitable board.

All this time the light has been gradually and almost imperceptibly increasing. Objects at a considerable distance have by degrees taken shape, or rather have assumed a new shape ; for the white light of the moon has the power of transfiguring the simplest and most everyday shapes. That grey mass which for the last half-hour has looked like one of the Trafalgar Square lions just awaiting an opportunity to spring at us now becomes merely a very ordinary block of stone. The mysterious silver and black causeway, leading to the watch-tower of an enchanted castle, is proved to be a long narrow mussel-bed which, at its farther end, meets a roughly thrown-up heap of stones in which some shore shooter is wont to intercept the fighting curlew.

The night-feeding wigeon and mallard now begin to fly to the sea, but whereas in the evening they come ' up slake ' in small lots, seldom numbering more than ten or twelve birds, they make the return journey in large parties, and the noise of their departing is a rush of wings, reaching its climax of sound overhead, and quickly diminishing as the hurrying forms are seen against the lovely colours of the sunrise.

Hardly have the last of the nocturnal-feeding duck left the mud than their counterparts of the day take their place. Mergansers come in from the sea at a tremendous speed. Obtaining their food underwater, the sun is quite an essential accompaniment to their meal-time. How differently are the bills of the mergansers formed to the corresponding members of the duck tribe. The former depend upon fish for their sustenance, and the inside of the mandibles is therefore fitted with a complete row of tiny teeth, admirably suited to the difficult job of obtaining a grip upon their slippery and elusive prey.

Soon we may see a pair or two of shelduck with their half-grown broods. Curious birds these, a kind of half-way house between the ducks and the geese. When near at hand the colour scheme of

black, white and chestnut is very distinct; yet at some distance, and especially if on the water, the bird appears simply black and white. Shelduck, like the puffins, nest underground, and are thus more likely to escape the unwelcome attentions of the egg-hunter.

As soon as the light of day has definitely won the fight against the beautiful but misty illumination of the moon, the air and the mud-flats are quickly populated with the hosts of the waders. Formed very differently from the ducks and geese, and yet how admirably suited to the purpose of their whole existence, the chief characteristics of the entire group may be summed up as follows: long wings, long legs and longish beaks.

On any autumn day, when passage migration is at its height, one is apt to wonder where on earth (or rather on slake!) are all these countless thousand birds to find enough food to keep body and wings together. That is to say until one has taken one glance at the mud and sand itself. Then one is more likely to ask 'where are enough birds to come from in order that the teeming millions of worms, whose casts lie thick upon every square foot of shore, shall be kept within reasonable limits?' It is equally interesting to watch the various flocks of waders feeding, whether this necessary occupation is taking place on a flood or an ebb tide. In either case speed appears to be the essence of the programme. When the tide is flowing, then each bird hopes to become the proud possessor of some much-fancied tit-bit before the incoming waves have placed it beyond the reach of leg and beak. While upon the ebb tide the process is reversed, and there is a combined scamper into the shallow water as each wave retreats, every slender beak and every pair of twinkling legs endeavouring to be first on the scene. In both these circumstances, it is naturally those with the longest legs and beaks which come off best. Leaving the heron out of the argument—for such an outsize in legs must be in a class by itself—the curlews have the pull so far as the commoner species are concerned. The curlew is followed by the godwit, the godwit by the knot and the golden plover; after these come several individuals among which there is not much to choose, dunlin, sanderling, common sandpiper (for a few of these birds of the hill streams do visit the shore before departing for the south), curlew sandpiper, purple sandpiper and little stint. Several other and rarer species *may* be seen, but cannot be counted upon. One quite common shore bird remains to be mentioned, and that is the turnstone. It is, however—as is also to a certain extent the purple sandpiper—a bird of the rocky shore;

but this by no means prevents many of them leaving their beloved seaweed-covered rocks and spending many profitable hours turning over the wrack and 'ware' upon the tide-line.

Interesting as it is to watch these active and busy feeders running up and down the oozes, the real thrill occurs when they take wing. To one beholding them for the first time, eye and feelings are far too busy taking in the whole joy and enchantment of the performance to worry about the why and the wherefore. It is only later on that certain characteristic features of the display occur to us. What a sudden and almost unbelievable change takes place in the flock as a whole when the background alters, and also when the birds themselves show us first their backs and then their underparts. The closely packed mass, numbering anything from fifty to a thousand knots or dunlins—or possibly the two species combined—flies past with the white breasts a brilliant contrast to the dark mud only a foot or two beneath the racing birds. Suddenly they all swing up and come between us and a large white fleecy cloud; instantly they are lost to sight, as the two whites mingle together. A few seconds later and the flock banks to return to us; at once the dark backs show up as clearly against the white cloud as previously the white underparts did when passing above the grey mud. The hurrying mass may pass us within a mere twenty yards or so, and then the swishing roar of the hundreds of long and narrow wings resembles a miniature hurricane, and it seems wellnigh unbelievable—had we not been present at the time both to see and hear—that so much noise could really emanate from such tiny fliers.

While we have been revelling in these thrilling sights and sounds, the sea has not been idle, but has been steadily and quickly—this being the time of spring tides—flowing. We are therefore compelled to move our position and seek drier ground. As we do so, a thought will probably strike us: how is it that in all the manœuvring of the flock every individual bird turns and wheels in instant and complete accord with its neighbour? It is not as if there has been time for any period of drilling or rehearsal, for quite possibly many members of the flock have only met each other a few hours ago, and may part again to-morrow. The sight of any collection of birds manœuvring in unison is well worthy of lengthy study, but surely no other type, whether resident or migrant, is so fascinating as is the family of the waders?

Now the sun is well up, and we have appreciated to the full all the delightful sights and sounds which have surrounded us since

dawn. True, we have by no means been satiated, but can that sensation ever take possession of a nature lover in connection with his favourite pursuit? None the less, the day is drawing on, and there lie before us many miles of country and, we hope, not a few joys of both flora and fauna awaiting us. *En avant* must therefore be the order, as we turn slowly and reluctantly from the sound of the waves.

The beauties of the season, speaking from a botanic point of view, will not reach their peak till next month, but already the countryside is as it were rehearsing its perfect autumn tints, and preparing for the glories of October.

*En route* from the coast our way is decorated with the early autumnal foliage of beech wood and larch plantation. Here and there along the roadside hedges, patches of russet beech leaves blend with the vivid red of the rowan berries hanging in clusters from their graceful parent.

We are now without the joyful accompaniment of bird song which would have been ours had we followed the same route in the previous spring; this is a deprivation certainly, but in compensation our eyes must be more than usually on the alert, so that their contribution to the general stock of interest and pleasure may make up for the meagre total which rewards our eager but slightly disappointed ears.

Some of the typical autumn feathered migrants will not yet have come to our shores, such birds as the fieldfare, redwing and hooded crow; but there will be material in plenty for the ornithologist among the fields and coverts.

Let us leave our car by the side of the road, since bird study from the driving-seat of a moving vehicle is not recommended in the highway code!

Our approach to the bank of a small burn, being made quietly upon the carpet of short grass, is unheard until we actually look over the high bank; this explains the loud complaint of the green sandpiper disturbed from the tiny bay on the opposite shore. His unmistakable triple whistle, as loud as, but very distinct from that of the redshank, would give him away even were it not for his tell-tale white rump, which shows up so extraordinarily clearly as he flies away. Though classed as a spring and autumn migrant, it is by no means unusual to see or hear this bird at any time in summer or winter: the writer has flushed it twice from the bank of a frost-bound burn in mid-winter.

A new sound attracts our attention ere the last-named bird is fairly out of sight : a clear multiple whistle, all syllables being on the same note. We look up and, after considerable searching of the clear sky, pick out what looks like a small and quick-flying curlew : it is a whimbrel or jack curlew, and the reason for the latter name is very clear. This is also a bird of the spring and autumn class, and when at rest is far more addicted to the sea coast than is its larger relative.

Having admired the miniature pools and eddies of the burn, a perfect model of the larger stream which waters the whole valley, we take a short cut back to the road, and in so doing disturb from the hay field—from which the pikes have been led—a long-tailed bird with a distinct resemblance to a sparrowhawk, but lacking that little tyrant's dashing flight. It is a young cuckoo, distinguishable from its parents (if such a word is applicable) by the white mark on the back of the head, and also by the fact of its still being in the country at all, for in this species the adults depart on their long southward journey alone, thus proving up to the hilt their utter absence of parental affection. Incidentally many of the wading birds which breed in the far north reverse this process, and the young of the year cover the enormous distance between the Siberian tundras and our shores, while their parents are still resting and recuperating after the labours of the nesting season. In both cases the well-known gift of the homing pigeon must surely be bestowed in double portion upon these young wanderers, to enable them to cruise the uncharted vastness of the cloud-wrapped heavens.

Seated in the car again, we once more head for the west, to make a perfect ending to the day by exploring 'the braes of broom and heather, and the mountains dark with rain.'

Fortunately the evenings in September still retain something at least of the long hours of summer, as the country for which we are heading can by no means all be traversed by car, and Shanks's pony will soon have to be harnessed.

Now the country begins to change once more, the rich and verdant lowland pastures and hay-fields give place to small irregular-shaped areas of grey wiry grass ; no longer do we see bared stubbles, for here the same fields are dotted with golden stooks. At this altitude it is still easy to distinguish the season's lambs from their mothers, as the babies of May have by no means caught up those of March.

Let us again leave the car within reach of the first convenient

burn, and follow the water up the glen. Although this little stream is not far as the crow flies from its companion which yielded us the green sandpiper, yet its appearance differs considerably from its lowland counterpart. Here the quiet pool is conspicuous by its absence, every yard is bottomed by bright and well-polished gravel, and rapid and boulder-strewn shallows form full ninety per cent of its course. The banks are beautified every few yards by alder, birch and rowan above, and by heather and bracken below. The heather has not that lovely continuity of colour which adorned it during the previous month, but there is here and there a patch or two of 'bonny purple'; while these and the almost black stalks of those which have finished flowering, make an admirable foil to the level beds of yellowing bracken. The bracken-beds themselves contain a variety of colour which must be seen to be believed. There is almost every gradation of green and brown, ranging in the first case from the dark black-green of spruce fir to the tender shade of recently opened beech; and in the latter from a pale flaxen hue to the full golden red of the frosted October bracken.

We shall assuredly not have moved more than a hundred or so yards upstream ere meeting those inseparable companions of the hill burn, the dipper and the grey wagtail. Both hardy and both with a passionate love for swiftly flowing water ingrained in their innermost feelings, they inhabit such a stretch of water month after month throughout the year. The grey wagtail is often confused with its summer relative the yellow wagtail, owing to the fact that both birds are coloured yellow on breast and abdomen; but apart from the outstanding difference between resident and summer migrant, there is the additional distinction that whereas the former has the longest tail of the commoner wagtails, the corresponding member of the latter is the shortest.

The dipper shares with the robin and the wren the duty of providing bird song during the winter months, and there is really a considerable and easily seen similarity between the dipper and the wren. Both are thick-set stumpy birds, both fly at a very low altitude with their short rounded wings, and the song of the two species is loud, rapid and amazingly cheerful.

The burn gradually diminishes in width as we follow its winding and rock-fretted course, while many a challenging 'go-back' greets us from the areas of feeding heather where the grouse are busy over their evening meal.

How skilfully a good keeper will arrange the burning of the



heather on his beat, never allowing the fire to get out of control, and never burning more than a small-sized block in the same area ; thus ensuring that the moorland game will, without the necessity of moving far afield, be provided with deep cover in which to nest, medium-length heather (three-year-old or thereabouts) for food, and freshly burnt patches in which to take their dust baths.

If the moor in question is favoured by the presence of black-game, we may have the good fortune to flush a full-grown black-cock from the bracken by the burn-side, and what a magnificent bird he is ; from the tip of his powerful beak to the end of the lyre-shaped tail—ornament ordained to grace the glengarry—he looks a thoroughbred gentleman, always assuming that we can overlook his sad preference for polygamy !

The burn has now dwindled to a mere thread of water at the bottom of the glen, and the high banks shut out all view except the sky ; we will therefore leave the tiny stream, and mount some knowe from which to admire to the full the panorama outspread around us.

As we climb up the steep rocky bank, the burn which we are leaving seems suddenly aware of our departure, and at the same time remembers that there is still one of its children to whom we have not yet been introduced ; with rather the air, therefore, of a conjurer producing a rabbit out of a hat, our friend the water presents for our inspection a ring ouzel. This, another true and typical hill-burn type, appears at first sight to be a blackbird with a white throat ; but is one which we shall *not* see upon our low-land lawns.

Now finally leaving the course of the stream, and entering the land of heather and cotton-grass, other sights and sounds are brought to our notice. Some of the meadow pipits which bred here in the summer have still remained in their nesting haunts, rather than accompany their companions thus early to the winter station in grass fields. Resembling small skylarks in appearance and habits, but without the rich-toned song of the migratory tree pipit, they are an essential feature of the moors in summer, and of the lower grass fields in winter and spring.

Numerous as are the meadow pipits, they will probably be outnumbered by the ubiquitous whinchat, ubiquitous at any rate upon the moors for the warmer months of the year. It seems a curious contradiction—and how many there are in bird names—that the whinchat should predominate among stones on the moors, while

the same bird largely gives place to the stonechat on a whinny common! Presumably this is on the same principle whereby the gull which possesses a brown head for less than half the year is called a black-headed gull!

A rather minor-keyed and sad whistle now claims our attention: it is a sound of a distinctly ventriloquial description, and for some moments we look in several directions, probably in fact in most directions except the right one; and still nothing moves, nothing happens. We will try a little gentle persuasion, clap our hands or wave a handkerchief. Immediately five golden plover rise from the heather much nearer to us than the spot from which we imagined the whistling call-note had come, circle round once, and then come to rest again; two upon stones, and the other three choosing rather bulky tufts of heather for their perch. It is a complete brood, the two parents and three well-grown young ones, already indistinguishable from each other at even a short distance away from the observer. Gone is the brilliant black and gold breeding plumage of the adults, and the young will not acquire theirs for the first time till the following March. Typical wading birds these, and yet nesting about as far from the sea as they can get.

With the exception of a possible peregrine falcon or raven, both more to be looked upon as forlorn hopes rather than with confident anticipation, we have now seen all the bird life that we may expect upon this moor, for the pretty and active little merlin will have betaken himself to the shore to try the sport of catching, and the change in diet of eating, shore waders.

Disappointing as it is and always must be to feel that we are at the end of our list, we can still linger amongst the heather to watch the sweet autumn colours change as the light fades in the sky, and the sky itself take on new and fascinating shades, as the sun sinks behind Cheviot and Hedgehope.

This being a fine evening in September, there is neither the brilliance of a frosty sunset in January, nor the fiery lurid blotchiness of an evening in November, prophesying storm and wind before morning. None the less, there is colour in plenty to satisfy any reasonable out-of-doors artistic sense, and we have time to appreciate it before leaving these enchanting moors to the grouse, the whinchat and the dipper.

Although during the height of the day a few solid white clouds will give far finer effects than will a completely clear sky, yet on an autumn evening such as this it is better that no cloud shall be

visible, at any rate to the west. This description being intended to apply to a perfect day—and how many a one comes to us during the course of a Northumbrian autumn—we will assume that the sky from north-west to south-west is free from cloud, so that there shall be nothing to interfere with the beautiful colours of the dying sun, other than the massive rounded top of Cheviot itself; and that stern old landmark can hardly be said to interfere at all, but is rather a darkened foreground, which throws up the sky above and around it in greater loveliness.

We are now about three months past the longest day, and Cheviot is blue in the distance. Recall the same scene a similar length of time before the longest day, and our old friend showed a hoary head to the dwellers on the sea coast. It is difficult to decide which suits him better, but since our obvious duty is not to compare but to appreciate, we will take our Cheviot as we find him, and let him fit in to his rightful place in any Northumbrian sunset.

On these occasions it is extremely difficult to pick upon any one colour in the wondrous sky and say 'that is such and such a shade,' because so continuously and steadily does every colour keep changing, that by the time we have decided what it is and have pointed it out to our neighbour, it has already become some new shade; and so the slowly moving kaleidoscope goes steadily through its repertoire, never hesitating and never faltering; soothing the senses and gladdening the eyes, and all the time, like some huge electric sign—but how many thousand times more beautiful—advertising the perfect entertainment which Nature is ever offering freely and gladly to those who can appreciate it.

Let us now leave this entrancing scene while there is light to show us the first stage on our homeward journey. Our eyes still full of the glories of the evening sky, and our ears attuned to Nature's orchestra, ere both members must once more devote themselves to worldly mundane affairs.

The light fades from the heavens, bird voices are hushed as their several owners seek repose in heather, tree or rock. Alone, dim, misty and huge, 'Muckle Cheviot' broods silently over his own wild country, as he has done for thousands of years, and as he will continue to do long after we poor short-lived mortals are gone and forgotten.

## KENSINGTON SQUARE.

BY DOROTHEA BARTER.

IN these days of rush and noise, when one is hurled in breathless haste from one poignant situation to another, it is a relief to turn into some quiet backwater and there rest one's mind on memories of those spacious, almost dreamlike, days before the war. There was leisure to talk and leisure to listen—the rhythm of hoof-beats and the tinkle of hansom-cab bells was heard in our streets. A pedal cyclist coasting downhill was considered a menace to pedestrians, and an unimaginative officialdom had not banished the Muffin man.

Such a little haven was Kensington Square, and although the tide of modern life has swept through it, and cars may now be parked around it, there is still enough of the old atmosphere left to enable one to conjure up its past days of glory, when it was the home of Ambassadors and Statesmen, when 'Lady Castlewood' looked across the green fields towards London, and music and laughter echoed from many an ancient house.

The late Mr. W. J. Loftie in his book, *Kensington, Picturesque and Historical*, states that the Square dates from the first year of James the Second, and mentions, among many distinguished names, that of Joseph Addison, who lived in the Square in 1711, his friend and neighbour, Swift, having lodgings at Kensington Gavel Pits in 1712. Mr. Loftie also mentions the Duchess of Mazarin in 1692, the Earl of Gainsborough, and Bishop Hough, 'successively of Oxford, Lichfield and Worcester, in 1721.'

The house which the Bishop occupied must have been one of the largest in the Square, but it is no longer standing, the Convent of the Assumption having taken its place. Archbishop Herring of York, and afterwards of Canterbury, had a house in the south-eastern corner of the Square when he was Bishop of Bangor in 1737. Mr. Loftie tells us that the Bishop's house was also inhabited by Prince Talleyrand, who seems to have lived later at Nos. 36 and 37, which were originally one house.

In more recent years we find such well-known names as Nassau

Senior, who, in 1826, lived at No. 32; John Stuart Mill at No. 18, in 1839; Dr. James Veitch in 1841 at No. 33; John Richard Green, the historian, at No. 14; and Sir Edward Burne-Jones, for a short time at No. 41. The little public-house at the junction of the Square with Young Street—'The Greyhound'—is mentioned in *Esmond*.

The Square with its attractive houses, no two alike, looks incredibly small—almost lonely—among the great buildings being reared around it. The three little streets which led to it thirty years ago, have been so completely changed as to be quite unrecognisable. In Young Street, Thackeray's house with its bow-windows is still standing, also 'Felday House,' and No. 27, the birthplace of two delightful makers of laughter, Denis Mackail and his sister, Angela Thirkell. Of King Street nothing is left. The row of tiny cottages, facing the garden wall of No. 36, the old-fashioned shops and the Fire Station, beloved of small boys, with the two horses standing in their stalls, ready to be harnessed to the engine if a call should come, all are swept away. At the corner of Ball Street, which has also disappeared, stood a small baker's shop kept by a man named Kuhn, who supplied many of the families in the Square; there was also a newspaper shop in King Street, belonging to an old woman with grey side curls and a large cap, Mrs. Doughty by name, of whom the children stood in awe—she certainly had a witch-like appearance. She was in the habit of closing her shop at odd times and pinning a paper on the door, 'Out, back in a hour,' but as there was no indication of the time she had left her shop, this was scarcely helpful. The Forge was situated in a tiny Mews off King Street, the ring of the hammer on the anvil, the glowing fire and the flying sparks were cheerful sounds and sights to the small inhabitants of the Square returning from their walks on winter afternoons. In Young Street there lived a tailor, appropriately named Cotton, surely the last man in London following this occupation to sit cross-legged on a table in his shop window sewing diligently!

When my parents settled in Kensington Square, the days of its grandeur were passed, and it had entered upon a period of quiet respectability, but the old houses still seemed to hold the spirit of those far-off times. The house in which I was born, and consequently knew best, had been inhabited by the Prussian Envoy in the reign of William and Mary. There were double eagles over the doors and at the back of the wide grate in the drawing-

room; my nursery had an iron-bound door which seemed to point to its having been, at one time, a strong-room. In another of the rooms there were stout iron rings under a window-sill to which a rope ladder could be attached. The bedroom doors were strengthened by flat iron bars suspended from a socket in the wall, when the door was closed these could be raised and screwed into a slot at the other side of the door-frame, thus making it impossible to open the door, even if the high brass lock was unfastened: a surprise entry was, at any rate, impossible. I wonder if the old Spit still remains in the kitchen, and the gun-rack over the fireplace. Area steps and tradesmen's entrances were then unknown. Our area was adorned by a large wire basket slung by ivy-wreathed chains from the four corners; in the summer it was filled with pink ivy-leaved geraniums and lobelia. It has been removed and a flight of steps built. The fish no longer arrives in a disconcerting way at the front door, naked and unashamed, on a flat wooden tray, at the same time as distinguished visitors. I feel sure the ladies of *Cranford* would have found some excellent reason for considering these shattering experiences highly desirable. In many ways the life of the Square resembled *Cranford*, and although the 'mere male' was present in larger numbers, we managed our smoking chimneys without his assistance! I have a vivid recollection of seeing, on entering my schoolroom one day, the ample skirts and hygienic-looking boots of our next-door neighbour, the daughter of Charles Darwin, protruding from the wide chimney, up which she was performing some strange operation with a bundle of straw, in order to prove that her drawing-room suffered from smoke when my schoolroom fire was lighted!

The men of the Square were mostly members of the Medical and Legal professions, or in Government offices; and when they had departed, soon after ten o'clock, walking through the Square with their morning papers under their arms, or driving in their neat broughams, their women folk sallied forth into the High Street to do their shopping. What a different High Street: small and comparatively quiet, with little old-fashioned shops, and a friendly feeling existing between those who sold and those who bought.

Only two lines of omnibuses ran through Kensington in those days—the 'London General' and 'The Road Car Company,' the latter carried a little flag-staff beside the driver, from which fluttered a small Union Jack!

Each house in the Square seemed to possess a charm of its own. Some of them contained the tiny powdering closets where the ladies and gentlemen of yore decked themselves with powder and paint and patches.

Old inhabitants called on new-comers, so that everyone knew everyone else, and we children all played together in the Square gardens and enjoyed a series of parties at each other's houses at Christmas-time. Our parents vied with each other in devising some original form of entertainment, and many were the delightful surprises revealed at these festive gatherings.

We had our Square Magazine Club and our Square Garden Committee. The garden itself was presided over by an elderly autocrat who raised geranium and calceolaria cuttings in a tiny greenhouse, which was concealed in an oval of shrubs in the centre of the garden. He was, by turns, the friend and enemy of the children, who were never allowed to penetrate the bushes and view the greenhouse. It became invested with mysterious interest, a kind of witches' cavern, as winter approached and a thin column of smoke was seen every afternoon issuing from an invisible chimney.

The Autocrat worked in the garden in the morning, and in the afternoon he donned a green coat with brass buttons, and a high hat with a gold band, and armed with a stick patrolled the Square, enforcing law and order.

We were not without entertainment in our Square—a German Band, four performers if my memory serves me correctly, played to us every Monday. The approach of Christmas was always heralded by a particularly dirge-like rendering of 'The Mistletoe Bough,' in which the groaning of the trombone was conspicuous. On May Day we were visited by a 'Jack in the Green'; this, alas, ceased when I was a very little girl, but I well remember the prancings of this strange figure and his attendant Chimney Sweeps. Punch and Judy came regularly, and when they were summoned to perform at our house, my Mother always paid the men a halfpenny a head for the children who clustered round our railings to watch the show. On winter afternoons much could be seen from my nursery windows: the Lamplighter carrying his long pole with the tiny twinkling light at the end; the little humped-back dwarf who delivered newspapers, and the cheerful Muffin man, his tray covered with green baize balanced on his head, his bell swinging gaily the while.

A place of the interest and antiquity of Kensington Square

should have its ghost, more than one perhaps. I never heard of them, but for those to whom it may appeal I will relate my own experience.

Frequently, after dark, I heard a horse galloping through the Square. As a child I took no notice, there were livery stables in King Street, and I vaguely connected it with them. As I grew older it struck me as singular. There was no sound of wheels, the horse was obviously being ridden or running away, but the latter was impossible as it happened too often. One night, I must have been about sixteen at the time, I heard the galloping hoofs in the distance. I stationed myself at the window and waited. It seemed to me the horse passed our house, but I saw nothing. I turned to my Mother, who was in the room, and asked her if she could hear a horse galloping; the sound was still distinct to me and the Square was quiet at the time—but my Mother, whose hearing was unusually acute, said she could not hear it. I wonder if it still happens and if any of the present inhabitants of the Square have noticed it.

My parents' recollections of Kensington Square went back many years. My Father attended a little Dame School at No. 14—it was kept by three sisters, the Misses Newman. It was styled 'A Preparatory School for Young Gentlemen.' As a little girl, my Mother had been taken to tea at their house, and it is thus that she describes them :

'They were ancient maids of a type long since extinct. Miss Elizabeth, the eldest, inclined to embonpoint. Her hair was arranged round her kindly face in flat curls, which were kept in place by a narrow band of black velvet, adorned by a small garnet brooch set with pearls, on her forehead. Before tea the boys had a dancing lesson, which was given by Miss Elizabeth, seated at an antique square piano. She played only one tune for each figure of the Quadrille, and gave instructions by calling out over her shoulder, "Balancey Rivington, Chassey Bayford, Set to Partners, etc." After dancing the boys sat down to tea and were served with sky-blue and white mugs, filled with milk and water to match, and thick bread and butter. The butter, I think, was a lost quantity. After tea there were recitations and songs. One little boy stepped forward and bowing low he addressed himself to Miss Susan, the least attractive of the sisters, thus :

"Lovely woman is a treasure,  
What would man do without her aid?"



Then all the boys flung out their right arms and sang in chorus ?

“To arms, to arms we fly.”

So many charming and interesting people have lived in the Square a whole volume could be written about them. Colonel Fyers at No. 38, known to dwellers in the Square as *Colonel Newcombe* on account of his resemblance to that perfect type of the ‘fine old English gentleman’; the distinguished soldier, Sir Thomas Gore Brown, and his charming wife at No. 7; Judge Lushington at No. 36, with his three delightful daughters, one of whom became Mrs. Leo Maxse, and another Mrs. Stephen Massingberd, both, alas, gone from us. They were all very musical and gave delightful parties. Mr. Huth lived at No. 17, which was afterwards inhabited by Sir Hubert Parry. His wonderful library overflowed its shelves, and he moved to a larger house. Mrs. Huth was a great loss to the Square children. She had no children of her own, but she made many happy afternoons for us, and tea at her house was looked forward to as an extra-special treat. She possessed a large doll with a wonderful wardrobe of daintily fashioned clothes, packed in a miniature trunk, which we were not only allowed to play with but, occasionally, to take home on a short visit.

At No. 40 lived Sir John and Lady Simon, both dear friends of my parents. To Sir John’s exhaustive works on sanitation London largely owes its clean bill of health. Their influence was, in fact, world-wide. He and his clever wife gathered round them a most interesting circle. Lady Ritchie, in her book, *Tennyson, Ruskin and Browning*, says :

‘In the last page of the 81st Chapter of *Præterita* occurs the name of Mrs. John Simon, “who,” says Ruskin, “in my Mother’s old age, was her most deeply trusted friend.”

‘It was at this lady’s house,’ continues Lady Ritchie, ‘sitting by the kind Hostess of many a year to be, that I first saw the author of *Modern Painters*; while, at the other end of the table, Mr.—now Sir John Simon (“Brother John,” Ruskin dubbed him long since)—sat carving as was his wont, roast mutton, “be it tender and smoking and juicy”—and dispensing trimmings and oracles and epigrams with every plateful.’

Here, too, came Canon Ainger, Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt, William Morris, all who were distinguished in literature and art. It was at a dinner-party at this house that, the conversation having

turned to the subject of Arctic expeditions, Lady Simon remarked she had often wondered why no attempt had ever been made to reach the Pole by air, and said she supposed some kind of balloon, with the basket artificially heated, might some day be invented. An unconscious prophecy of the electrically heated aeroplane of to-day.

As age crept on Sir John used to take a daily walk to and fro before his house on the sunny side of the Square, a quaint little figure in a long circular cape of black cloth and flat-brimmed high hat, even then quite out of fashion. It was an attractive sight to see him, surrounded by a bevy of his very young neighbours (two of Thackeray's grandchildren amongst them), walking up Young Street, past the house where *Vanity Fair* was written, *en route* for Herbert and Jones, where he placed his small friends at the little marble-topped tables and provided them with ices, the excellence of which, it seems to me, no subsequent maker of that delicacy has ever attained to. During his morning stroll in the sunshine he liked me to join him, or sometimes sit with him in the Square garden. From a capacious pocket inside the cloth cape, he would often produce a book of poems and putting it into my hand command me to read. I found it a terrifying ordeal, but I was seldom allowed to proceed far before he stopped me, with uplifted hand, and continued the passage himself from memory. Lady Simon, as clever as her distinguished husband, was hardly able to walk at all and was forced to spend her days indoors; but visits to her teemed with interest and her letters were a real joy.

Dr. Merriman, who belonged to an old Kensington family—his forefathers having lived in the old 'Court Suburb' for some three hundred years—inhabited No. 45, at the time of which I write. He and his wife and their five daughters might truly be described as 'pillars of the Church,' and the Clergy of the Parish found in them willing helpers in all matters parochial.

When Mr. Edward Clifford of Church Army fame came to No. 37, we at once took personal interest in his pictures (he was an artist of great ability), for we—again like the ladies of *Cranford*—prided ourselves collectively upon the individual achievements of our neighbours. I have in my possession a copy of his portrait of the Father Damien which was drawn just before he left to devote himself to the service of the Lepers.

Any record of the Square would, to me, be incomplete without

mention of Miss Susan Warren, one of those sweet souls who seem to have 'no memorial,' but who live in the hearts of those who have had the privilege of knowing them. I had not then read of or grown to love 'Miss Matty,' or Miss Susan must have been my living portrait of her. I see her now in her flowing black silk dress and fringed mantle, and the black silk poke bonnet which I always thought was made on a cardboard foundation, while we children gathered round her to hear her wonderful story of the little elves in their coral caves, grinding their salt mills, to whose efforts the sea owes its claim to be called the 'briny ocean.' She lived with her brother and elder sister at No. 43. Life was poorer when she left us.

I suppose the dwellers in the Square no longer meet together on Sunday evenings in the summer as they did when I was a child. The ladies discussed books and parish or household matters, while the men walked up and down or sat in groups, talking over the political situation and consigning Mr. Gladstone to the nethermost depths. I am glad they did not have to grapple with the Socialist of to-day. In 1894 the society of the Square was enriched by the advent of Miss Lilian Faithful as Principal of the Ladies' Department of King's College housed at No. 13. Her delightful personality and brilliant gifts won affection and admiration on all sides. In her book, *The House of my Pilgrimage*, she speaks of her sojourn amongst us, and refers to my Mother as 'The Mother of the Square.' She was a frequent, and most welcome, visitor at our house, and her keen sense of fun lent a spice and sparkle to the Square parties. Those simple but delightful parties, and the people who gave them, have all passed away, but all who loved the Square in the past, and who love it in the present, will echo the hope that the dear old houses and their garden will long be preserved, and destruction's hand be stayed, leaving them in their quiet dignity for those who see and understand.

# LINES ON HOLDING A LOCK OF KEATS'S HAIR

*(on its first return to England as a gift to the nation, after more than a century of loving care in Spain from Fanny Keats, her daughter, and her two grandchildren).<sup>1</sup>*

My eyes are misted with the sudden sense  
Of loss unending: past and present stand  
At 'undescribable feud'—the words are near,  
Warm as the presence that is lingering here—  
And in my heart a sweet and bitter pain  
Swells like a mountain from a marshy plain.

Under this lock that lies within my hand,  
Almost a living whisper in my ear,  
Once moved a mind that climbed the inward range  
With Beauty for its comrade so intense  
It burns immortally, the living mind  
Of an English boy who is to humankind  
A loved possession always, past all change.

Time, an alighting eagle, recompense  
From Earth's four corners on the winnowing gales  
Has carried now and laid upon the height  
Of the rock-bound fastnesses of Poetry  
Whereon his being dwelt: eternally  
He is enthroned above the clutch of Night.

The fiery pang of every passion pales;  
Peace comes to all creation late or soon:  
Brother, rejoice; the anguished hour is flown  
A gift, wide-winged, to heaven, and Love alone  
Shines on for ever as the evening star.

How devious is the human pilgrimage!  
Abiding now 'where the eternal are,'  
Unleashed at last, a spirit of light, he sings  
To realms of Beauty an unchallenged tune.  
Strange Earth indeed that in this strident age  
So dwells upon him: is it not a truth

<sup>1</sup> Readers of CORNHILL will remember the story beautifully unfolded in 'Fanny Keats and Her Letters,' October, 1935, and February, 1936, by Marie Adami.

That even the hurrying hordes must understand,  
 'The principle of Beauty in all things'  
 Outlasts mortality? This lock of youth,  
 By love long tended in a foreign land,  
 Comes home at length, an English heritage.

O breathe on England's spirit in this hour  
 And in the after-time to be to you  
 The peace of Beauty that is fallen like dew  
 Beyond the night upon your deathless day!  
 Let this rich hair, this late returning dower  
 Be for a blessing on the chequered way:  
 A gift remote from Earth's regality,  
 Simplicity its chaplet, may it be  
 A wave-washed vessel with all peace imbued,  
 A laying on of hands, a quietude,  
 A cadenced murmur like a vesper bell,  
 A truth deep sparkling in a dateless well;  
 And down the avenue of ages prove  
 The lasting radiance of a sister's love.

GORELL.

#### *DEPARTURE.*

THEY are going very soon;  
 See them huddle on the eaves  
 All the golden afternoon.

See them huddle on the eaves;  
 Watch their wild uneasy flight;  
 Look at all the browning leaves.

Watch their wild uneasy flight  
 When there comes a storm of rain  
 In the fading Autumn light.

When there comes a storm of rain,  
 And they flutter to and fro,  
 Restless, up and down the lane.

Watch them whirling to and fro;  
 See them huddle on the eaves,  
 Waiting for the word to go.

M. C. G. HOOTON.

## PASTORAL.

By W. J. BLYTON.

UNKNOWN to most readers, because uncollated in the usual literary history, is an extraordinary pleiad of eighteenth-century poems which attempt to break away from fake pastoral and from formality and urbanism which ruled the 'age of good sense.' That very English century 'never spoke out' except momentarily in certain odes of Gray, Collins and Smart, and in the summits of Burke. The finite things which it was its mission to say, it said with spirit, solidity and point; and prose was its genius.

But there were flutterings, as of a lark in the cage remembering the empyrean: one whole side of its soul was not 'breathed' and uneasily it knew this. Then through a chink came a gust of the wild, in Thomson's 'Seasons,' explaining its long vogue in cottage, hall and University. The compliment paid to it was a crowd of remarkable imitations and variations. What excited sensitive Englishmen in that age, already feeling that Pope's 'Windsor Forest' did not express the country in their blood; what moved them as much as Rousseau's nature reveries moved sentiment in Europe, was the fresh, first-hand smack on the first page of 'Winter':

'The driving sleets  
Deform the days delightless; so that scarce  
The bittern knows his time, his bill engulfed,  
To shake the sounding marsh; or from the shore  
The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath  
And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.'

Atmosphere; out-of-doors; change and *chiaroscuro*, of which English talk and life are full, entered literature again after departing with the early Milton.

Thereupon this strange thing happened of which I speak: there was a spate of companion-pieces on kindred themes. You do not read or quote them now—but I have been doing so, with respect and amusement, for some time past. I do not mean the greater men who were influenced: Goldsmith in 'The Deserted Village,' Crabbe's sulky realist genius, the nature episodes in Cowper's 'Task,' or Gray's *largo* tune, the Churchyard Elegy, but

precisely these other neglected curiosities which tell us quite as much of the time and its yearnings as do White's 'Selborne,' the talk of Dr. Johnson or the pictures of Hogarth, Gainsborough and Reynolds. How many well-read votaries of literature have perused Dodsley's long blank-verse treatise, 'Agriculture'; Gisborne's similar manual of natural history, 'Walks in the Forest'; John Phillips' complete guide to the orchard country, 'Cider'; Dyer's 'Fleece' as well as his 'Grongar Hill'—the former being Pegasus in harness; the latter, the 'mountain-nymph sweet Liberty'? No more, I should say, than have read 'The Schoolmistress' of Shenstone, and the moral 'Minstrel' of Beattie, both in Spenserian measure; 'The Spleen' of Matthew Green, a nature-guide to high spirits, in brisk octasyllabic rhyme; 'The English Garden,' hortatory horticulture by Wm. Mason; nature glimpses in the blank verse of Pollok's 'Course of Time,' Kirke White's country rambles, and Young's 'Night Thoughts'—to cite but a few.

Poetry, it seems, was to turn pedagogue; the wild horses of the sun to become Dobbin in the shafts of instruction. Gay's 'Rural Sports' had not this systematic or homiletic air, just previously, any more than the humorous rogue Allan Ramsay's 'Gentle Shepherd,' which had a bright unreal *Petit Trianon* accent. To fire fact with imagination, genius was needed, the genius which Wordsworth said made poetry 'the transfigured countenance of science.' This was withheld. Talent only was given. But what provocative and curious failures or half-successes talent produced nevertheless! Recall that what follows came in a period devoted to urban life, clubs, prose, order, utility, logic and society: that men in city pent should 'babble o' green fields like any Christom child' in imitation-Milton, that was to be silenced by the wilder music and richer magic of Keats, Coleridge and Shelley.

How our great-great-grandfathers strutted their countryside; exhibited the 'swains' and 'nymphs' on their domains; expatiated upon the blessings of the rural life; cribbed from Virgil, Hesiod and Theocritus (never from the fact-bound, aphoristic Tusser); drest the dirty duties of a farm in noble literary periphrasis; paused dramatically, with the reader, on the steps of the Hall to congratulate Providence (or Heaven, as they reticently addressed Him) upon the admirable gradation and hierarchy of the social order and the Paley-like convenience of the contrivances of Nature! 'Life went very pleasantly then,' as Besant said in the title of one of his novels. Tom Paine was a bad man not hearkened to;

'Liberty' Wilkes was a scoundrel of the towns; no Joseph Archer had come to un-bow the back of the agricultural labourer; France had not gone 'mad' yet—or had not yet attended to Mr. Burke's arguments; as for the Corsican ogre, he was in the merciful mists of the future. Somerville's blank-verse *vade mecum* to hunting, the 'Chase,' was what no gentleman's library could be without; and near it would be Addison's *Spectator* papers, Johnson's *Rambler*, and in non-conforming houses, Cowper and Young, Law's 'Serious Call,' Wesley's Journal and the like. A self-contained world, without vagueness, nerves, or ideals inconsistent with a lowly bearing of oneself toward one's betters; but with much gin, cock-fighting, may-pole dancing, low wages, rough feeding and occasional hunger. Crabbe, who, as Hazlitt said, 'describes things like a person who has called to distrain for the rent,' is our authority for the last; and he is 'Nature's sternest painter and the best' if we are to believe Byron. Round the coasts, press-gangs for the Navy were busy taking Hodge for a diet of salt pork and sulphur; inland, the recruiting Sergeant, preceded by drum, worked with practised tongue on gullible ploughboys or ambitious hedgers. Cottagers were visited by some humane squires' ladies; their daughters put out to service, their home-staying sons 'improved.'

For those who could spell at all, the poets tried to cater. Phillips, for instance, would tell them all about 'Cider' in his poem of that name; the soil and culture for the apple (with 'an invocation to the ladies and gentlemen of Hereford' and a 'dedication to Mr. Mostyn'—

'And thou, O Mostyn, whose benevolence  
And candour, oft experienced, etc.'),

the proper aspect for an orchard; such soils as Kentchurch, Sutton-Acres, with a digression on Ethelbert and Offa; how clay and gravel soils can be made to grow pears; circular trenching and watering: all this, and much more, in the inimitable idiom of the day, with more than a trace of emulation of Milton. Still, the horse-sense comes through the pseudo-classicism:

'There are, who, fondly studious of increase,  
Rich foreign mould on their ill-natured land  
Induce laborious, and with fattening muck  
Besmear the roots; in vain! the nursling grove  
Seems fair awhile, cherished with foster earth:  
But, when the alien compost is exhaust,  
Its native poverty again prevails.'



No doubt ; but high-farmers on thin loam must do it yearly to get paying crops.

Grafting and pruning follow, and a digression in praise of tobacco—

‘ The Indian weed, unknown to ancient times,  
Nature’s choice gift, whose acrimonious fume  
Extracts superfluous juices, and refines  
The blood distempered from its noxious salts ;  
Friend to the spirits, which with vapours bland  
It gently mitigates, companion fit  
Of pleasantry and wine ; nor to the bards  
Unfriendly, when they to the vocal shell  
Warble melodious their well-laboured songs.’

‘ Well-laboured songs ’ is good ; they believed in the virtue of work, even when singing ; they liked to *build* their books, and perspiration was almost the equivalent of inspiration. Nowadays fruit-growers have no objection to pigs running in well-grown orchards ; but John Phillips warns our forefathers—

‘ The filthy swine will oft invade  
Thy firm enclosure, and with delving snout  
The rooted forest undermine ; forthwith  
Alloo thy furious mastiff, bid him vex  
The noxious herd, and print upon their ears  
A sad memorial of their past offence.’

But this would not at all please the Pigs Board with their bacon scheme. However, Phillips let us hear what were the favourite apples of Englishmen nearly two centuries ago—Pippin, Moile, Permain, Ottley, Eliot, John-apple, Harvey, Thrift, Codling, Pomroy, Russet, Cat’s-head, Bosbury, Musk, Red-streak—the last and the best, he thinks, ‘ uncivilised and of no regard, till Scudamore’s skilful hand improved her.’ He frowns on wine drinking while there is the juice of the apple to drink. Quite in the heraldic spirit of the era, he details the great Families of the West—the Scudamores, Cecils, Altrennis, Aldrich, Burleigh, Hanmer, Bromley, Winton, Beaufort, the Earl of Weymouth, Robert Harley, ‘ the Lady Trevor, the author’s friend in sickness,’ after which we have ‘ the sycophant and hypocrite denounced.’ Nay, the poet remembers he is a royalist—

‘ O fact

Unparalleled ! O, Charles ! O, best of kings !’

and turns to his own day :

‘ Now we exalt, by mighty Anna’s care  
Secure at home, while she to foreign realms  
Sends forth her dreadful legions, and restrains  
The rage of kings . . .  
What shall retard the Britons’ bold designs ? ’

Evidently not cider, nor the roast beef of old England. Shame-facedly, we can’t strike this naïve note now. It was so different when

‘ to the utmost bounds of this  
Wide universe, Silurian Cider borne  
Shall please all tastes, and triumph o’er the vine.’

Well, cider is a wonderful drink, and a vat or two of it come on my fields at haymaking time ; but malt and hops still lead by several heads. And Tea : the rustic is a great devotee of Cowper’s ‘ cup that cheers but not inebriates.’ And could you have got Johnson and De Quincey to exchange their incessant tea for cider ?

There was Dr. John Langhorne’s ‘ Country Justice,’ picturing former rural life—gypsies, venal clerks, rapacious overseers, poachers, toilers—

‘ each face the picture of a winter’s day,  
More strong than Teniers’ pencil could portray ’ ;

and Michael Bruce of Lochleven, who coined the line ‘ follow nature up to nature’s God,’ and the couplet :

‘ I fear no loss : my mind is all my store :  
Heaven gave content and health ; I ask no more.’

Graham, a North Briton in Anglican orders, wrote ‘ Sabbath Walks ’ and English ‘ Georgics ’ : Erasmus Darwin’s ‘ Botanic Garden ’ has been dispraised amiss—it was the recreation of an original mind, and a forbear of Charles Darwin ; on the other hand, ‘ nature-touches ’—of a kind—were attempted by Harvey in ‘ Meditations among the Tombs ’ and Blair in ‘ The Grave,’ and—stately and very general—by Akenside in ‘ Pleasures of the Imagination.’ Thomson with all the flaws was king of them all ; a pity his ‘ muse ’ would ‘ waft ’ him from places he knew to climes which he did not, whereupon his style became that of a prize-poem, as unlike as possible to the concrete particularity of Cowper, or the photographic intimacy of White at Selborne.

Grainger’s ‘ Sugar Cane ’ is much inferior. For one thing,  
VOL. 154.—No. 922.

## PASTORAL.

it is an echo of 'Cider,' and its scene is in the British West Indies in their boom years, before sugar beet was known. Besides, he will persist in calling the natives 'swains,' which is intolerable from a naval surgeon from Berwick. In France at the same time the Abbé Delille was exploring similar territory with his 'Country Gentleman' (translated into English by John Maunde). Delille translated 'Paradise Lost,' very 'prettily' Landon thought, rallying him upon its elegance. Delille shows 'how a proprietor should live in the country; folly of many desires; meanness and disappointment resulting from town life; Winter, its pleasures—backgammon, chess, lecture, angling, shooting, arts, bowls, archery.' This is in rhyme. Even so, it failed to convert the pre-revolution French landed gentry to their duties.

The most determined and elaborate of these versified essays was Robert Dodsley's 'Agriculture.' Dodsley (1708–1764) was a publisher and patron of literature. He proposed the Annual Register, made a Collection of poems by several hands, and his shop was in Pall Mall, where he commenced with a loan of £100 from Pope. He had been a 'livery-servant, but his excellent conduct raised him to be one of the most influential men of his times.' 'Agriculture' is in three blank-verse cantos, and his first design was a big poem to be called 'Public Virtue' in three books: 1st, Agriculture; 2nd, Commerce; and 3rd, Arts. He has the quick stepping style of Young's 'Night Thoughts' without that writer's epigram and imagination. To the Prince of Wales he says—

'From cultivation, from the useful toils  
Of the laborious kind, the streams of wealth  
And plenty flow. Deign then, illustrious Youth!  
To bring the observing eye, the liberal hand,  
And with a spirit congenial to your birth,  
Regard his various labours through the year:  
So shall the labourer smile, and you improve  
The happy country you were born to rule.'

The next section is headed: 'Landholders exhorted to deal honestly and liberally with farmers'; and then, 'The young farmer advised to frugality, temperance and industry,' after the following manner:

'Yet ere thy toils begin, attend the muse  
And catch the moral lessons of her song.  
. . . Thy gains are small,  
Too small to bear profusion's wasteful hand.'

It is even so, two centuries after he wrote. But we guardians of the soil in 1936, seasoned as we are to bodily exertion, must ruefully admire the yeomen of that England, who not only, like us, had their plough (ox-pulled), harrow, roller, horse-hoe, scythe, sickle, hay-rakes and substantial wagons (rather like Nelson's Victory in bulging shape), but, unlike ours, their threshing was done by hand. Labour was more cheap and plentiful, it is true; but they cannot have spent much time in sleep or recreation. A man grew all his live-stock's own fodder, winter and summer; there was little if any of the modern buying of balanced rations, weatings, home-milled bran, flaked maize, poultry-food and oyster shells. He had to search for his own marl and lime, or barter for it: it was not delivered in ton lots, with a guarantee. Our fertilisers—potash, sulphate of ammonia and superphosphate—were unknown; farmyard products restored the land year by year. Moreover, Dodsley describes his contemporary food-raisers at war on fox, badger, otter, kite, stoat, partridge, hare, weasel, mole, with net or spring or 'the explosive thunder of the levelled tube,' as he calls the gun. 'Oh, happy he! happiest of mortal men!' begins an apostrophe which only too plainly echoes Virgil; and, doing so, reminds one that, in Dryden's vivid translation of the 'Georgics,' the same poetic guide to the career has been done better, even allowing for the differences between husbandry in classical lands two thousand years ago and the same calling in northern latitude to-day.

After an idyll on Patty the milk-maid and young Thyrsis, and an invocation to Pan: a personification of Autumn (surpassed by Keats) and of Winter (beaten by Shelley), there is a hymn of Nature, nearly as good as Thomson's and not nearly so good as Adam's in 'Paradise Lost,' of which it is a reminiscence. Dodsley, however, had 'light'; he knew a great farmer when he saw one, and frankly admires Jethro Tull, 'the late Mr. Tull of Shalborne, in Berkshire,' adds a footnote, 'in his Horse-hoeing Husbandry, or an Essay on the principles of Vegetation and Tillage'—

'If new improvements curious wouldst thou learn,  
Hear then the lore of fair Berkaria's son.'

His doctrine is summarised. 'Thus taught the Shalborne swain'!  
Nevertheless, theory is not enough—

'Experience to experience oft opposed  
Leaves truth uncertain.'

Dodsley's work is exhaustive, for his time, and rewards the reader for the couple of hours which its perusal requires. It is staggering to reflect what was demanded then of the average large farm; its owner or tenant had to *plant* his own hedges and *hoe* them exactly as if they were a crop. He apologises to his Prince that he is 'untutored by the lore of Greece or Rome, a stranger to the fair Castalian springs'; but, with all its stiffness, it is entertaining as well as trustworthy.

I come to another of these economists sporting the laurel:

'The care of sheep, the labours of the loom,  
And arts of trade, I sing.'

This is, of course, Dyer and his 'Fleece.' The programme follows the eighteenth-century plan: it is thorough, and it is orderly. After the indispensable dedication and invocation, he indicates the airy downs and gentle hills, 'with grass and thyme o'erspread and clover wild' where sheep best thrive: he says he is thinking of Banstead Downs, Sussex, Dorset, and the country behind Dover, Normanton in Rutland, Salisbury Plain, Ross and Leominster in the west country, Herefordshire, Monmouth, and Leicestershire.

Wool still loomed large in Britain's revenue in those days, and had done so ever since the Woolsack had been chosen as the emblem of her law and stability. Merchants, factors, combers, spinners and weavers crowded the townships of East Anglia and the West Riding of Yorkshire—before Lancashire knew cotton mills or the Midlands its metallurgical industries. The subject lends itself to word-pictures. Yet I sometimes wonder what shepherd took the gentle bard's instructions: I have seen much-thumbed copies of 'Ellis on Sheep' in shepherds' huts, but not, so far, 'The Fleece.' From it they might learn that ashes are a good salty dressing for pastures, and how their forbears tentatively mated Derbyshire and Welsh sheep with Cotswold, Devon and Hampshire. From obliging footnotes they would discover that 'Tripontian fields' is a synonym for the country between Rugby and Lutterworth,

'Where ever-gliding Avon's limpid wave  
Thwarts the long course of dusty Watling Street.'

He poetically prescribes for cough, rot, half-ail or halt, scab; utters a panegyric on our English climate; praises salt, tar, pitch, the crow-flower and oil; shows when to medicine and when to feed; weather-signs and coming storm or snow; he contrasts our shep-

herds with those in the classics and in the scriptures ; the sheep-shearing and washing—the shears made in ‘the caves of Brigantium,’ namely Sheffield. Cue for eclogue between Damon and Colin. Pray like the subjoined picture :

‘ When many-coloured evening sinks behind  
The purple woods and hills, and opposite  
Rises, full-orbed, the silver harvest-moon,  
To light the unwearied farmer, late afield  
His scattered sheaves collecting, then expect  
The artists, bent on speed, from populous Leeds,  
Norwich, or Froome ; they traverse every plain  
And every dale where farm or cottage smokes :  
Reject them not ; and let the season’s price  
Win thy soft treasures : let the bulky wain  
Through dusty roads roll nodding. . . .’

He implores the swains to enclose their lands, and so avoid the need for marking their flocks with pitch, ‘noxious to wool.’ ‘Besides, in fields promiscuous held, all culture languishes. . . . The idle pilferer there easier eludes detection.’ ‘’Tis art and toil give Nature value.’ For relief, he gives his readers the story of the Argonauts, glimpses of the ancient wool countries, of Cashmere, Spain and Atlas, Kansas and Louisiana and Peru ; and he will

‘ turn the compass o’er the painted chart,  
To mark the ways of traffic ; Volga’s stream,  
Cold Hudson’s cloudy straits, warm Afric’s cape,  
Latium’s firm roads, the Ptolemean fosse,  
And China’s long canals . . .’

Gray and Wordsworth both admired Dyer, and certainly his is the most near poetry of any treatise touched on thus far. He even contrives to make the processes of combing and carding, fulling and dressing, dyeing and weaving, entertaining. He visits a wool factory in Calder valley, between Halifax and Wakefield, and views ‘with silent joy the sprightly scene,’ and the new circular machine invented by Mr. Paul to spin either cotton or wool ; then to Burstal and the Aire Valley and Leeds—and ‘so appear the increasing walls of Manchester, Sheffield and Birmingham,’ their artisans contrasting with the ‘soft sons of Ganges, and of Ind, ye feebly delicate.’

Gray’s friend, Mason, produced ‘The English Garden,’ comparatively unadventurous and little-read, with the same aim in view. In it, everything possible is said about gardening, sweetly or ornately. Dr. Armstrong wrote ‘The Art of Health’ ; a home-doctor in verse.

None of them have, to the practical farmer's mind, the authenticity of Bloomfield's 'Farmer's Boy.' Very humble in the realm of song, this rhymed catalogue of a handworker's year keeps very close to earth. One quite understands why W. H. Hudson should go on pilgrimage to Troston, this labourer's village, on reaching England after a boyhood in exile amid the estancias of South America where he had seen the poem and longed to smell and see actual rusticity. The result was a beautiful and pious essay. Bloomfield for a brief period was almost as popular as Hardy; of his first poem, 26,000 copies are said to have been sold within three years, and there were thirteen editions in fifteen years. Like another peasant whom I will name, he was spoilt by being taken out of his proper world—to be a shoemaker in London. Thomson's 'Seasons' was his teacher, as it was for many in that century, with Cowper and perhaps Goldsmith.

'Strange to the world, he wore a bashful look,  
The fields his study, Nature was his book.'

The bookish squire, Capel Lofft, obtained publication for the poem at Bury St. Edmunds, and largely helped to make it the rage, after its rejection in London. There were even translations in French, 'Le Valet du Fermier,' in Latin and Italian. Byron laughed at the boom, Crabbe growled. And indeed it is no masterpiece. Though he is fresher than any of the above-named authors, there is more nature-magic in a tale of Hardy's, a country poem of Wordsworth's or Tennyson's, than in it all. But then it is almost the only work of its kind: one long, entire poem dealing with the detail, from within, of a farm-worker's year. It is fact, and yet 'emotion recollected in tranquillity.' He was only a boy-of-all-work, deputed to scare crows, fetch in the cows, feed the pigs, clean out stables, and be at beck and call of others. Precisely therefore he got an extended and congruous view of a year's agriculture through a quick boy's sensitiveness.

'Twas thus with Giles; meek, fatherless, and poor,  
Labour his portion.'

But the bondsman had a good master (Mr. Austin).

'No stripes, no tyranny his steps pursued;  
His life was constant, cheerful servitude. . . .  
Quick-springing sorrows, transient as the dew,  
Delight from trifles, trifles ever new.'

Up early to look after the scarecrows, he joins in the bird chorus in the sunk sandy Suffolk lane, and back to pre-breakfast milking, one cow ever leading the herd in (this is true of every herd I know), a precedence 'won by many a broil.' At dairy work he laments that the town denudes the countryside so much, till the rural wives lack cream, and have only blue thin milk with which to make cheese, and this so hard that it turns the knife-blade and at last goes into the pig-trough, where

'it rests in perfect spite,  
Too big to swallow and too hard to bite.'

More acute observation is displayed among the sheep, the lambs challenging each other to a game :

'Adown the slope, then up the hillock climb,  
Where every mole-hill is a bed of thyme,  
There panting stop; yet scarcely can refrain;  
A bird, a leaf, will set them off again.'

Bloomfield is at his best in concrete detail; the *largior ether* he does not breathe with ease. Clare, that other agricultural poet, can give him points here, as well as in penetrating pathos and subtle word-pictures only a little less remarkable, at his best, than Keats. Yearly I see, on my own domain, after the sowing of the turnip seed, the small birds descend in the next field—

'There thousands in a flock, for ever gay,  
Loud chirping sparrows welcome on the day,  
And from the mazes of the leafy thorn,  
Drop one by one upon the bending corn.'

Beautifully too he describes the unbedding of the lark. Mary, a village beauty, assists in the harvesting, in 'creaking stays of leather, stout and brown,' no more worn in the land. On his farm there was a bad-tempered gander which seized the beasts by the fetlock; and only the swine welcomed the assault, receiving it curiously, lying down, as a caress. 'Autumn' has a fine opening surely :

'Again the year's decline, 'midst storm and floods,  
The thundering chase, the yellow falling woods.'

The wandering pigs look for acorns, and the first gale to bring them pattering down :



'It comes ; and roaring woods obedient wave :  
 Their home well-pleased the joint adventurers leave ;  
 The trudging sow leads forth her numerous young,  
 Playful, and white, and clean, the briars among,  
 And o'er their heads, loud lashed by furious squalls,  
 Bright from their cups the rattling treasure falls.'

They startle a duck in a pool, whose flight in turn startles them.

'With bristles raised the sudden noise they hear,  
 And ludicrously wild and winged with fear,'

they decamp, snorting. The pig easily loses its head. After winter wheat is sown, Giles in harsh weather takes up the old occupation of rook-scaring and makes a shelter

'whence creeping forth to duty's call he yields,  
 And strolls the Crusoe of the lonely fields. . . .  
 The field becomes his prison, till on high  
 Benighted birds to shades and coverts fly.'

'Winter' is the best section of all, giving the sense of the farm animals' increased dependence on man. Realities are his theme, and his style sober. He takes hay to the cattle in the byres, and each cow snatches a mouthful as he passes. At long last, after tea, he can doze in the big, warm, unsymmetrical farm-house kitchen, till chilblains or the snapping fire awaken him to go forth yawning to give his team their fodder, the spokes of his lantern patterning the snow on the way. At times there is an obligatory visit to the heavy-sided ewes penned in their distant field, and happy he if he has the moon to light him 'and all the glorious pageantry of heaven,' and clouds

'Scattered immensely wide from east to west,  
 The beauteous semblance of a flock at rest.'

Now for another singer : no nightingale, but a shuffle-wing or simple yellowhammer. Oddly, the name of the threshers-poet, Stephen Duck, has almost died away in the minds of book-hunters. He was a Wiltshire labourer, who at school had a smattering of the three R's ; in 1724 he set about polishing up his arithmetic, and a London friend lent him Josephus, Seneca, Ovid and Bysshe's *Art of Poetry*, and he spelt out Milton with the help of a dictionary. His 'scattered verses' could not, in his village, be kept secret ;

and certain clergymen becoming interested in him, he was ordained and became a beneficiary of the Queen. Their influence rapidly spoilt the poet of the fields, although the peasant in him died hard : he interrupts some classicisms with—

‘The Field calls me to Labour ; I must go :  
The Kine low after Meat ; the hungry Steed  
Neighing, complains he wants his usual Feed.  
Then, Sir, adieu.’

‘The Thresher’s Labour,’ his best effort, is true report, notwithstanding a weakness for ‘Ceres’ gifts’ and ‘Cyclops’ hammers,’ feathered tribes, and tuneful groves. Behind the tyrants—farmer, wheat, flail—stands the tyrant Earth, and the other tyrant, Time.

‘No intermission in our Work we know ;  
The noisy Threshal must for ever go.  
Their Master absent, others safely play ;  
The sleeping Threshal does itself betray.’

The workers envy the shepherd, who is left much to himself. Over them is the farmer’s eye.

‘He counts the Bushels, counts how much a Day ;  
Then swears we’ve idled half our Time away :  
“Why, lookye, Rogues, d’ye think that this will do ?  
Your Neighbours thresh as much again as you.”’

Glad to leave this winter work in the barn, they come at length (after harder tasks) to haymaking, and Duck describes well the charm of the season preceding. But mowing is torrid work—

‘We often whet, and often view the Sun ;  
And often wish his tedious race was run.  
At length he veils his purple face from sight  
And bids the weary Labourer goodnight.  
Homeward we move, but spent so much with toil,  
We slowly walk, and rest at every Stile,  
Our good expecting Wives, who think we stay,  
Got to the door, soon eye us in the way,  
Then from the pot the Dumplin’s catch’d in haste,  
And homely by its side the Bacon plac’d.’

Then to bed, to recruit strength for the morrow. Next day, quite in the manner of Beethoven’s ‘pastoral’ symphony, a storm

musters in the summer skies and sends the workers to the hedge for shelter. No sooner are the ricks safe than the master cries—

‘For Harvest now yourselves prepare ;  
The ripened Harvest now demands your Care.  
Get all things ready, and be quickly drest ;  
Early next morn I shall disturb your Rest.’

He does so, and the reapers have ‘to rise while yet the Stars are glimmering in the skies’ to go into the wide beauty of the uncut corn. This is even more arid work than the hay. Jugs of harvest ale are pushed round at the harvest supper, and for a moment the future is forgotten.

‘But the next morning soon reveals the Cheat,  
When the same Toils we must again repeat ;  
To the same Barns must back again return  
To labour there for Room for next year’s Corn.’

We moderns are fortunate in having loving delineators of the English soil and its custodians ; glimpses in Trollope’s *Orley Farm*, in George Eliot, in William Barnes, the Dorset poet, in Hardy still more, in Jeffries and Hudson, in Edward Thomas and Edmund Blunden and, assuredly not least, in Miss Victoria Sackville-West’s impressive and honest long poem of the Wealden farms and occupations, ‘The Land.’ One reads it with the rich content which a characteristic canvas by Constable evokes. If it have a lack, it is that the actions and atmosphere of the farmyard proper do not figure therein as livestock should do in any such wholesome panorama of permanent England.

The poetic curiosities of the eighteenth century enumerated above may be called Benthams in buskins or bays, learning in the Laurel, the Muse turned schoolmarm ; we may smile at their Information for the People, attired in correct singing-robcs. But they were on the right track. There is, true, more of the magnetic and elder presences of Pastoral in certain hedgerow songs of Shakespeare, in couplets of ‘L’Allegro’ or ‘Comus,’ in Collins’s ‘Evening,’ in Keats’s Hymn to Pan—

‘O Harkener to the loud-clapping shears, . . .  
Breather round our farms  
To keep off mildew and all weather harms ;’

—in the russet inspiration of Wordsworth at his best ; in the brooded-over landscape of Tennyson, or the shy hursts and ‘green,

warm-muffled Cumnor hills' of 'The Scholar Gipsy.' But it is refreshing for once in a dream-while or so to indulge a tenderness for the chaffinches, when the eagles can look after their own fame. They were 'minor' poets whom even their illimitable subject failed to make anything more. Granted; but sincere love of nature can drink at the wayside beck as well as from the fountains of the dawn. (A peasant like John Clare was nourished from both; but he was unique.) They were reprinted often as Keepsakes and Amulets, for the generation that was growing up contemporaneously with Wolfe, Nelson and Wellington; they appealed to the same homely sense in Englishmen which appreciated Constable and Morland, and later the pure and kindly genius of Birket Foster, lover of trees and stiles and bridges. They tried to be English Virgils, teaching arts and crafts as well as essaying the magic of words; and if they failed, it was because the secret of antiquity was temporarily lost, and the lucky impulses of the Romantics were not come.

However, even the masters' wreaths are darkened by a still richer rustic poetry: that of the countryside itself. Fine as it is to enjoy the literary evocation, to hear Shelley's lark or Meredith's, Keats's nightingale or Arnold's, Tennyson's blackbird or Browning's thrush, there is an unexpressed residuum in the birdsong itself. It is educative to share their reports of subtle perception and shadowy apprehension; it is even better to be able to 'stand and stare' at a twilight meadow among elms till we are almost incorporate with it; to let oak, ash and beech translate their knotty life into the consciousness. It is a blameless paganism, a rudimentary but quietening religion uninvolved in controversy. The temple of the downs, forests and farms may not have everything in it, but it is not spoilt by man's over-busy definitions and dialectics. Vaguely but powerfully, men have felt this in the last century, and perhaps the young 'hikers' of to-day feel it likewise.

Very daringly—and successfully—Hazlitt accounted for this modern nature-piety, in a little-known passage. He said its secret lay in *association*. For even the rudest, commonest objects—a leaning plough in a field-corner, a tilted wagon in a straw-yard, a mossy out-house, cattle in a pool, horses outside a blacksmith's—are often found connected with the strongest emotions by memory and ancestry. 'It is because natural objects have been associated with the loves, holidays and sports of our childhood, with the solitude when the mind takes strongest hold of things, and clings

with fond interest to whatever strikes its attention, that we love them as we do part of our being.' Moreover, though

'our having been attached to any particular *person* does not make us feel the same attachment to the next human being we meet (because we connect the idea of the *individual* with man),—the tie becomes indissoluble if we have once associated strong delight with natural objects, and we ever after feel the same attachment to other objects of the same sort. . . . Every new *face* is an unanswered riddle: to walk from Oxford Street to Temple Bar is like being compelled to read through the first leaf of the volumes in a library. But a woodland of trees, a flock of sheep, the greatest number of physical objects do not puzzle the will, challenge the intellect or distract the attention, but are massed in one harmonised feeling. Our intercourse with Nature is not liable to accident or change, suspicion or disappointment.'

Hence Rousseau meeting with the periwinkle fell on his knees exclaiming, *Ah! voilà de la pervenche*; Linnaeus did similarly in a bed of broom in flower; Wordsworth's heart leapt in age at the rainbow, as when a child; Pope said he had a special regard for an old post which stood in the courtyard before the house where he was brought up; but all of us know this 'sentiment of being.'

Perhaps its best exponents are not even the poets, but those who in fact work the land year in year out. All genuine countrymen have *style*. Their talk of it is translated colour, significant sound: expression merges in the thing itself, and their words smack of earth. My oldest labourer will bring me a ball of dry grass and leaves, and explaining that it is a mole's nest, launch into a curious eclogue to which Hesiod would have listened and have reported verbatim. It is utterly satisfying to more than the literary sense. He has lived nigh eighty years amid things and tackle, seed and the chemistry of earth; and old mythology is not dead for him. Hearken in the village inn to the shrewd and plain discussion on thrashing or reaping tackle, and recognise its actuality of impression, and profound identification with the theme, for what it is—poetry. How absorbed I have been I do not know till the talk is over.

In a world of man which has always been in unrest, one wonders whether the nearest uncontroversial refuge is not this handled poetry of sight, touch and smell and homely use; the harness, ropes, halters and medicinal drenches in the stable; the rustle at hay-feed time in the cowhouse; the dealing with mole-hills, worm-

casts, rabbit holes, rank growth in the copse, the pungent bonfires of rubbish, the sudden sight of the late afternoon moon mirrored in the ditch reminding you it is time you were homing, the divine dalliness of the routines, the *feel* of diverse fields to the knowing foot, the handling of various soils, and woods, and implements, the 'field smells known in infancy.' Though the 'high farmer' of to-day may in effect be a scientist, he can fall back upon the simplicities of man's immemorial childhood, and join creativeness to a satisfied physical nature—a concourse of conditions such as generates by natural law a good mental and sensuous life. It is a great heresy to suppose that the printed kind is the only poetry : it is not a branch of authorship, but the subtle stuff of which life is made—and makes the life worth while.

With Lamb,

'I am in love with this green earth; the face of town and country; the unspeakable rural solitudes, and the sweet security of streets. My household-gods plant a terrible fixed foot and are not rooted up without blood . . . Sun, and sky, and breeze, and solitary walks, and summer holidays, and the greenness of fields, and the cheerful glass, and candle-light, and fireside conversations, and innocent vanities, and jests, and irony itself—do these things go out with life?'

In exactitude and receptivity, what progress has been made in our nature-observation in England since those days. As nature interpreters, take Robert Lynd, Siegfried Sassoon on Foxhunting, Cherry Kearton, Frances Pitt, Marcus Woodward, A. E. Knox, H. J. Massingham and Pamela Gray; all worthy of the Gilbert White tradition. Yet I would not like to see total oblivion wait on Thomas Gisborne's blank verse 'Walk in a Forest' (of which ten editions were called for); or James Hurdis, of Bishopstone, Sussex, curate, with his 'Favourite Village' in 1800; Kirke White, another unlucky young poet, of Nottingham; Charlotte Smith, who poetised on 'Beachy Head'; Mary Roberts with her 'Annals of My Village'; Mary Mitford whose *Our Village* survives out of her ambitious historical stories written at Swallowfield, near Reading, to keep her voracious old father; Edward Jesse, the woodland ranger; Leonard Jenyns, of Swaffham Bulbeck; Thomas Miller, the basket-maker; Canon Atkinson, on the moors; Canon Rawnsley in the fells; J. S. Wood and C. A. Johns at the Lizard; J. R. Wise in the New Forest, Edward Buxton in Epping Forest; Edward Newman, 'Rusticus' of Godalming when that was but a larger

village. They are a handful from a large and fortunate 'cloud of witnesses,' who would not despise Swammerdam spending a lifetime in ditches observing frogs, or Buffon falling in worship before yellow broom on an English Down, Fabre studying ants, Bose the sensitive plants, Maeterlinck and Burroughs the bee; but who stand wardens over their little beat of Nature, and patiently report thereon. They consist of country rectors, bailiffs, schoolmasters, ornithological society members, delvers into barrows and cromlechs, antiquarians, geologists with their little hammers tapping for prehistoric secrets, poets conscious and unconscious, mute or articulate. Even hikers halt at moments to listen to the *genus loci*, feel 'a presence that disturbs' with joy, and see Evening personify herself as a goddess, a priestess, a ghost in the sky—a web of direct and indirect associations. Even the suburban must have his pet animal or bird, windowbox and garden; and for him, romance is in seed catalogues. Guide-books and picture-cards remain in the book-shelves as records of Pan's voice heard last year on the mountains. Nay, how far is the study of horses and 'form' for the 3.30, outside the 'Bunch of Grapes,' a warped expression of nature-love? And the dog led on a string in Acacia Avenue before bed-time a declension from Diana and her woodland pack? Sports, as treated by Neville Cardus or Bernard Darwin, are a hold on nature. Nearly everyone has a weakness for sheep in the landscape, as truly as Watteau, Boucher, Sidney Cooper or Val Prinsep. Animal stories and films have their faithful. There has been a divorce between the English variety of man and nature; but it was unwilling and, I would fondly believe, temporary and remediable.

## *TIME AND THE HOUR.*

BY PROFESSOR L. W. LYDE.

‘THE evening and the morning were the first day.’ So the Book describes the first recorded experiment in the creation of a measure of time—for a world as yet neither toned nor tainted by contact with the mind of Man ; and the scribe did not think the order of the words strange, though they ran counter to his strict Levitical Law that the day was ‘from even unto even.’

Then exactly what did the scribe mean ? And why did he measure the time in that way ? He meant—from the beginning of evening to the end of morning ; and he included the hours of most accurate sight and of easiest travelling in the world in which he lived, and he excluded the after-noon hours of maximum heat and maximum glare.

So long as the climatic conditions on the earth have been more or less such as we know, dense population can never have been associated with high latitudes—with latitudes which, wherever the actual heat-equator lay, were polar or semipolar in relation to that equator. Perhaps, it could not have been associated with very low latitudes either. Certainly, the ‘Home of Man’ lay in middle or lower-middle latitudes—in ‘Bible’ latitudes.

This involved rather high sun-power and some equality in the relative length of day and of night throughout the year ; but, so long as Man was really an arboreal primate, an apish anthropoid, sun-glare must have been modified by forest-shade. So long, too, as he remained really a tree-dweller, he must have been in the habit of looking down rather than looking up.

As the forest dried and died out, or as he moved away from it, one of his worst trials must have been due to sun-glare, especially if he moved into lands of summer drought, such as Palestine and Greece ; and he must have learnt very soon to travel by night, star-guided to the various little Bethlehems of his daily plans and pilgrimages.

The object of his longest pilgrimages may have been to escape from the bright light ; and that probably caused the wholesale migration of Mediterranean peoples from their summer-drought



lands to the misty islands and peninsulas of our north-western seas. Certainly, some of the prominent traits in the Welsh and the Irish seem to be a legacy from days of over-stimulation by bright light. But at least the emigrants survived elsewhere. In Classical Greece the fine Nordic and Alpine breeds died out—paralysed by bright light, or so much shattered by it in physique and nerve that they were poisoned by malaria or became the victims of civic strife born of ‘nerves.’

Most of the mischief was done through the eye, as it is with the deterioration of British breeds of cattle in the Argentine and Rhodesia; for in the eye—and only in the eye—the nerve is completely exposed. To the fair Northern types who had invaded Greece, their colouring was fatal; and they seem to have lacked some of the cleverness of British cattle in Rhodesia, where the Herefords and Shorthorns have become *night-feeders*, like elephants and negroes.

Apart from any question of protective pigment, the processes of vision are the same for everyone everywhere, in spite of racial differences. Every field of vision may be roughly—and often very unequally—divided into an upper and a lower zone; and everywhere, but specially in those Mediterranean latitudes to which we owe so much of our civilisation, the upper zone in noonday sunshine is too bright to be closely watched, and even too bright for objects in the lower zone to be seen with full accuracy. Of course, at night the contrary is true; the lower zone is veiled, while objects in the upper zone are vividly clear.

We must conclude, then, that we can find conditions of *maximum accuracy* only between the two extremes of brightness and darkness; and, if the whole field of vision is to be covered with this maximum of accuracy, both the upper and the lower levels must have their full values. This implies equality between them and conditions as favourable as possible to the concentration of human attention; and on such a point we can get no better guidance than from the Classical Greeks in that century of supreme excellence in art and literature which culminated in the Age of Pericles.

In that century the lyric poet Pindar was supreme as an artist and as a craftsman, and he has left us in no doubt as to the factors which provoked his creative activity. The perfect combination was threefold: in the lure of colour—glow without glare; of silence—especially when a chromatic pause emphasised an atmospheric hush; and of form—when either the background threw up the

outline of visible shapes, or fading light blurred them into what seemed to him mysterious sensations rather than scenic details.<sup>1</sup>

Undoubtedly, colour came first—the *chiaroscuro* of the hours of accurate vision, the dusk-enfolded glow of eventide, amber light and umber shade; and these are, and must always have been, the essential conditions of the most accurate vision. The old French name for the chromatic pause, *le temps entre le loup et le chien*—though often misunderstood in modern times, even in France—referred originally to the speed and the certainty with which the wolf *could* be distinguished from the dog in the revealing light of that pause, with its equilibrium between the upper and the lower zones of the field of vision.

But the scribe of the Book of Genesis must have been wholly ignorant of these general conditions, even if equally alive to his own particular environment. He lived in what we may call the Age of Elijah (c. 850 B.C.), in a tiny land of rough topography and summer drought. Palestine is no larger than the single county of Yorkshire; from Dan to Beersheba is no farther than from Chester to London; Jerusalem is the same distance from Nazareth as Westminster is from Salisbury; the Jordan between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea is no longer than the Thames between Oxford and Greenwich.

But in that tiny area there are examples of almost every known land-form, from peak to rift, and every known type of climate, from polar to torrid—with bananas and cane-sugar growing even in Galilee. Such a land has its own schemes of 'sunrise' and 'sunset,' especially when the landscape—as round the Sea of Galilee—is 700 feet *below* ocean-level; and, when it is a dusty land beside a very warm sea, it has its own secrets of *chiaroscuro*.

Greece, though three or four times the size of Palestine, is still a very little land; but Olympus is higher than Hermon—twice the height of Ben Nevis. From Olympus to Cape Matapan (the old Tænarum) is no farther than from the Peak to Beachy Head; but Greece has more crests above 8,000 feet than England has above 3,000! Under such conditions topography may have more to do than latitude in determining the actual hours and the incidence of sunshine. Delphi gets sunrise in summer two hours later than places only a few miles away, but on the Boeotian side of Parnassus, as Luz gets it two hours later than places on the Damascus side of Hermon; and, even so, the sunrise is 'grey,' because the height

<sup>1</sup> See also "Dust that is a little Gilt." CORNHILL, October, 1935.

of the intervening obstacle cuts out the 'coloured' layers of sunshine.

Obviously, the actual words used by the Genesis scribe were dictated by that crystallisation of the local conditions affecting human life which we call the *genius loci*, especially the intricate topography and the duration and intensity of the sunlight. The day was still an astronomical measure of time, but received most attention for its human divisions into light and darkness, associated with work and rest; it had lost its mathematical precision and stability, and had begun to vary in length, with a corresponding variation in the meaning of the word.

Such variation is often useful and sometimes necessary, though it need never involve any silly pretence that the sun is wrong! Our natural or mathematical or astronomical day is from midnight to midnight (Greenwich mean time); our civil or legal day varies not only from that, but also in itself. Thus a Larceny Act, in which hours of darkness may be significant, varies from an Incidence of Labour Act, in which daylight ought to be of most importance; and a Public Health Act may reasonably differ from both of them. In any case, the duration of daylight must vary with latitude and with the season of the year.

The Greeks, with their genius for practical compromise, humanised and simplified the whole problem. Euclid—to the amazement of those who forget that the Pythagorean philosophy began in science, and was never divorced from science—has been called 'the most typical of the Classical Greeks'; and one of his two textbooks (the earliest recorded textbooks in the world) was 'Of Risings and Settings.' Light, which is the differentiating factor in the geographical environment of Greece, was the vital consideration; but the summer drought, the factor of second importance, suggested that it must be light without heat too great for human comfort and convenience.

It was here that time and place became important. In lands of summer drought, such as Greece, the wet season must be the busy time for man and plant; and the parching rainless months, like the torrid midday hours, must involve a kind of *siesta*—a 'sixth' hour rest, as counted from sunrise. In Ancient Greece, then, the day ended with maximum temperature, which comes everywhere after noon, not before it—long after it in a marine climate, such as that of Greece; and the word for 'end-of-day' really meant 'noonday heat,' and it continued to be used in that sense

even when the day ended in the evening. Of course, it could not then suggest heat, but only light; and so a word which had meant 'noonday heat' came to mean 'evening light.'

But why was the 'end of day' moved from noon to evening? Because the dark fruit-growers and fishermen of this Mediterranean peninsula were conquered by fair farmers and foresters from Northern plains. The thin-skinned hills of Greece could not rear milch cattle, and the natives were not likely to call their female children *daughters* ('milkmaids'); but, even if there were no great herds of cows to milk, the conquerors kept to their own old way of measuring the day—from milking-time to milking-time, from pre-sunrise twilight to post-sunset twilight. And their word for *twilight* meant 'milking-time.'

The essential change was in the relative importance of light and heat. In these summer-drought lands noonday heat is associated with glare, and noonday light with short shadows; but the evening light is never more than glow, and shadows must be long. These Greeks could measure time—astronomically—with far more accuracy than they thought necessary, and this indifference may help to account for the entire absence of perspective in their artistic work. But, as they became more particular, they realised the ease of measuring both space and time by shadows; and this led them to invent sundials, and concentrated their attention on just those atmospheric phenomena that lie behind any sound theory of perspective, and that are the essential conditions of *chiaroscuro*.

No other part of Greece was so favourable to this development as Pindar's homeland, with its opalescent air, its mountain wall to westward, its wide prospect eastward; and it happened to be also the Greek home of the Pythagorean science and philosophy.

Boeotian Thebes was a war-scarred city that looked eastward across a low coastal plain, over which the time of sunrise and the duration of morning sunshine were normal. But within ten miles to the south rose the wild face of Cithæron to a height greater than that of Ben Nevis, and to the west the still higher shoulders of wooded Helicon were equally near. In mid-winter even at noon Cithæron cut off the sunlight from the little plain south of Thebes, and in mid-summer 'sunset' east of Helicon came early in the afternoon.

Soft wet winds off the Corinth Gulf brought to Helicon, too, unfailing stores of rain, which dressed its glens in vivid green, and fed its sacred fountains. It was quite natural for the Greeks to

think that the beautiful mountain was the favourite haunt of Apollo and the Muses, and that their favourite hour was when sunset laid across the scene all the colours of the rainbow, widely spread out and softened to velvet, with amber as the central tint.

Greek poets spent little time in singing the beauties of nature, because they were obsessed by the human note; the landscape is there, but only as a background for Man—for rapid and dramatic action, which must not be hampered by details of weather and scenery. But he who runs may read; the forms and the colours are all present, delicately pencilled in or implicit in the origin of the creative impulse. Indeed, they are the whole secret of Pindar's inspired metaphors; the heroes of war and sport and love are deeply conscious of the background—the moonlight, the little house beneath the oak, the grey cranes in the reed-beds, the larks that salute the reflection of light which we call dawn, beginning to sing the moment that the reflecting atmosphere comes overhead.

But much that, in a quiet way, is to us abnormal, was to the Greeks supremely normal. For the summer drought was a great encouragement to an out-of-door life. Houses were simply shelters against occasional storms and the regular winter rains, boxes in which to sleep. Even so they were modest almost to meanness, and much of the actual floor-space was devoted to roofless courtyards and canopied colonnades—not to mention larders, cisterns, and other house-keeping conveniences. They were never homely, as the houses of the northern farmers were; and that may help to explain the absence of some home virtues. Was wider vision some compensation? They had this—in a literal sense.

For centres of population, even when quite small, were normally places where the distribution of relief gave long hours of sunshine, or where the character of the relief compensated for short hours by great intensity; and heights enjoyed the double gain of long hours and great intensity.

These favoured 'knobs,' like those at Dumbarton and Stirling, obviously gave protection against foe and flood, especially when they were of considerable height, as at Athens (500 feet) and Argos (over 900) and Corinth (nearly 1,900); and they were of tremendous importance if they were crowned by a perennial spring, such as the Peirene fount at Corinth. But their military value as the citadels of political capitals was really less than their moral value to the citizens at large. Looking out from such a platform is like looking out from a ship at sea. Your eye is not glued to the foreground

at your feet, or limited to the narrow values of a city street; and so your mind is not distracted, still less dominated, by the tyranny of your domestic bondage.

The psychological value of this must have been immense. In a tiny land crowded with mountains the natural reaction of the mind is an impression of strict and circumscribed localisation, almost one of compression and imprisonment. Of course, this may be true even of a wide plain if it has a heavy ceiling of low cloud. Only a desert plain beneath a cloudless sky will always grip with a sense of freedom and limitless space; and it was from such plains that the world reaped its three great monotheistic creeds. The attraction of the Greeks, then, to these favoured outlooks kept them free from the sense of imprisonment, and gave them a sense of space, of far horizons, of radiating vistas, such as we might have judged quite alien to their environment.

The one obvious limitation was to any easy travel by land. There were no 'Roman' roads over the narrow passes, nor any echoing thoroughfares over the little plains, as there were in Palestine. Men went down by long-walled 'streets' to wander in trade and hazard over the wine-dark sea; by land they made only mental journeys, drifting down the Corridors of Time. And it is not easy to do that in broad daylight.

But, when the rough relief of their mountain land hastened the hour of 'sun-down,' it set in motion all the typical atmospheric moods of real sunset—the air cooled, vapour condensed on myriads of dust-atoms afloat in that air, anticipation of evening lights and shadows, an opalescent sky, and pantheistic colouring. And so we have the poets and the philosophers reacting at one and the same time to both day and night 'controls.' They did not use metaphor, as we do, without realising that it was metaphor, and that there were material objects of comparison behind it; they did not think of themselves as floating on some wandering floe of space, but only as anchored to a fixed earth; they saw the stars not as a multitude of remote points of light, but in the unity of a jewelled veil.

The secret was that the impulse to creative activity was stirred by the *chiaroscuro* of dream-time, whether they were day-dreams or other; and so to all the poets, but to Pindar beyond doubt and on his own evidence, Day was the Evening and the Morning and the Dream-time between.

*IN SEARCH OF THE MODERN SMUGGLER.*

BY HENRY T. F. RHODES.

PARIS is no more a city of surprises than London, but some months ago an incident occurred in a street near the Champs Elysées at nine o'clock in the morning which caused a huge crowd to collect.

A loud explosion was heard and the sound of splintering glass. Immediately afterwards two men rushed out of the house from which the explosion had come. Their faces were cut, their clothes were torn. They hailed a passing taxi, jumped in, and were at once driven away.

Police arrived, forced back the crowd and kept it at a respectful distance with a cordon. Something serious had clearly been afoot. Experts arrived from the Department of Judicial Police.

The details of what these experts found were not widely reported. It was known that they discovered a laboratory which had been partially wrecked by an explosion. It was extremely well equipped. The actual cause of the accident was not then reported. In fact, the two men who narrowly escaped with their lives had been engaged in rather a dangerous operation in more senses than one. They had been acetyllising morphine on an experimentally large scale to produce heroin. It is believed that this was a research laboratory engaged in experiments to evolve a method to cheapen the production of heroin.

By reason of this accident—although the research workers who were victims of it have not been arrested—one of the nerve centres of a large-scale illicit industry was exposed. To the practised eye the wrecked apparatus, the unbearably acrid fumes of acetic anhydride which filled the room, told their own tale.

Illicit no less than legitimate industries have their specialised organisation. This most modern phase of unlawful traffic which begins with illegal manufacture and ends with smuggled distribution is run as efficiently as any other modern business. It retains a team of highly qualified scientific workers and employs the most modern methods of production. It has nothing to learn from other industries as to efficiency in distribution. The finance at its disposal is practically unlimited.

Even now information regarding the machinery of the organisation is not widely diffused. To open with the Champs Elysées incident is really to begin in the middle of the story. This Parisian laboratory was a new venture. The reason for the recent increased activities of the drug barons (as they have come to be called) in France is due to a well-defined set of causes.

It is only necessary briefly to refer to the post-war history of drug manufacture and smuggling. As a result of the War drug-taking increased to an alarming degree. Realising the demand suppliers were not wanting. Drugs were manufactured and distributed in large quantities.

Those who directed (and direct) this organisation are men who are smugglers by nature and choice. If it were not drugs it would be, and in many cases has been, arms, silk, or pictures. The methods and organisation employed for the distribution of drugs is of the same type as that used to deal with any other contraband. It is more elaborate and efficient because there is so much more money in it.

As is well known, the League of Nations became extremely active. Advisory committees were set up to deal with the control of manufacture of narcotics. But the drug barons were for a long time in no difficulty regarding manufacture. There were European countries in which drugs could be manufactured without let or hindrance. Turkey was among them. The Government admitted that in the first six months of 1930 two tons of morphine and four tons of heroin had been exported. In 1931 Turkey was the centre of this traffic.

But in 1932 the national conscience of a great people prevailed. The Turkish Government introduced drastic regulations for the control of the manufacture of narcotics. Turkey ceased to be a haven of refuge for the drug barons.

Bulgaria, however, was willing to accommodate them and to Bulgaria they went. In 1932 a factory was erected called the Balkan Products Factory, at Radomir, near Sofia. Its chief chemist was a Frenchman of high academic attainments. The appearance of the building was as innocent as its name, but in the vats and cauldrons of its laboratories tons of illicit drugs were produced. The factory was one of six or seven others.

The drug barons felt themselves secure. They built up influential connections which they hoped would ensure immunity from interference. Their agents whispered in the ears of Ministers, and succeeded in gaining a hearing in the highest places. Even the



Macedonian revolutionary organisation, with its tremendous influence in Central Europe, was induced or compelled to co-operate. The barons had almost unlimited funds and knew how to spend them to advantage.

But they calculated without the international pressure that the League could and did exert to the full. Its most powerful ally and most able intelligence officer was F. W. Russell, Lewa, chief of Cairo Police. Determined to stamp the evil of traffic in narcotics out of his own country, he realised that it must be attacked at its source. Indefatigably he collected information regarding the drug barons, co-operating with every police headquarters in Europe. Mr. Perrins, for example, of our own Home Office assisted him in exposing a powerful drug cartel known as the Eliopoulos organisation. Mr. Perrins played the chief part in piecing together what Russell Pasha has called the 'Elie jigsaw puzzle.'

At last even Bulgaria closed its doors against the drug barons. These international pests had nowhere to lay their heads. That was the cause of the explosion which took place in Paris a few months ago.

Such men as these are, however, not to be beaten so easily. They still had, and have, enormous influence and financial backing. The immunity they had enjoyed in regard to drug manufacture had been withdrawn. They decreed that the manufacture should continue in defiance of international law.

That is the new problem. The root of the evil has been attacked but not extirpated; the drug barons have had a severe check, but they have not been defeated. A chain of small illicit centres of drug manufacture have been set up in France and Central European countries, and they manage to produce sufficient narcotic material, and to distribute it, to cause the authorities a good deal of trouble. Owing to the decreased turnover, it is not the profitable business it was, but there is still ample reward for industry and ingenuity.

But distribution, the actual smuggling of narcotics whether licitly or illicitly produced, is one of the most remarkable pages in the long history of contraband. Every device and invention of civilised man has been pressed into the service of the modern smuggler. Men and women in every walk of life are their agents. Chemists and other scientific men, aeronauts, forgers, representatives of the law and even diplomatic agents are among the motley and talented company. This organisation is linked up with the great lights of gangsterdom in America who protect the interests of the

drug barons in the United States where a very brisk trade in narcotics is done.

A certain gang of drug runners interested in the American traffic was, for example, able to secure the services of a man who had been a Chargé d'Affaires in Vienna. Under cover of his diplomatic passport he smuggled at different times a ton and a half of heroin into New York via Miami and Montreal. On one occasion he entrusted fifty kilos of the drug to an agent for delivery at a certain address. This man was held up, assaulted, and robbed. A few days later the Chargé d'Affaires was visited by none other than Jack Diamond. Diamond agreed to retrieve the stolen drugs and to find safe custody for the balance, concerning which the diplomat was very nervous. The drugs were, in fact, placed in charge of a member of the Diamond gang named Ludwig Auer. It was not very safe custody after all. Auer was murdered in the Central Hotel, New York. The drugs disappeared.

This almost incredible story speaks eloquently for the far-reaching influence of the European drug barons. The tentacles of the traffic centred in Europe stretch across the continents. The smugglers pass by steam, aeroplane and fast motor-boat with their contraband. Even the caravans of the desert go secretly loaded with drugs.

On September 9, 1932, a Frontiers Administration police patrol on duty at the Sinai frontier of Egypt met a caravan of twelve camels from Palestine on the way to Egypt.

The men appeared to be respectable merchants engaged in legitimate business. Camel pack after camel pack was searched, and nothing suspicious was found. But one of the officers noted that an Arab who was dealing with the animals was carefully mixing up those which had been searched with those which awaited examination. He gave the officer in charge of the patrol an agreed signal indicating that his suspicions had been aroused. Immediately the six merchants found themselves covered by the rifles of the police.

Practised eyes re-examined the packs minutely. The saddle staves of some of the loads looked exceptionally stout. Tapped, they gave out a hollow sound. The mystery was solved. These staves had been split, grooved, packed with hashish, and fastened together.

The life of the preventive police in the twentieth century is as dangerous and full of incident as it was for English Customs officers in the eighteenth. Smugglers frequently desperately resist the confiscation of their merchandise. On October 15, 1932, the

Egyptian police at last tracked down a notorious family of Arabs named Baqar who were brigands and smugglers of the most dangerous kind.

The gang was finally cornered in what was literally a den among the sand dunes on the outskirts of Alexandria. 10.30 p.m. on October 23 was the time fixed for the raid. Baqar's headquarters was a collection of huts heavily guarded by an armed patrol. The smugglers opened fire as the police closed in and three policemen were seriously wounded. The whole gang, however, was secured and a large quantity of contraband including hashish and other dutiable material.

In Europe the smugglers' methods are less violent but more cunning. Those who control the distribution of drugs in Europe rely upon the difficulty and indeed the impossibility of examining every article to be cleared through the Customs in which contraband might be concealed. Some years ago a large consignment of broomsticks reached this country from Germany. For some reason these broomsticks came under suspicion and several of them were sawn in half. These, like the camel staves, had been hollowed out. They were packed with strychnine. Consignments of coal have been used to conceal drugs. Individual lumps are split, hollowed out, and filled with the contraband material.

But these are not the only methods of distribution employed by the lieutenants of the drug barons. It is far better to evade passage through the Customs altogether if this is practicable. Those who are responsible for the distribution have generally served a long apprenticeship in smuggling. They know all the tricks of the trade.

A smart motor-boat enters some quiet creek or river perhaps on the south or east coast of England. The engines are stopped and there is a heavy splash. Any observer might imagine that the anchor was being dropped. But when the motor-boat leaves, a buoy is left floating in the water. No anchor is attached to it, but a large watertight bag heavily weighted with iron shackles. A day or two later another motor-boat appears to pick up this contraband cargo. It is thus passed from ship to ship until it is landed at some deserted spot far from the keen eyes of Customs officials. The transference from vessel to vessel greatly complicates the problem of tracing the smugglers.

Another convenient means for the evasion of Customs examination is the aeroplane. In England where the distribution of drugs is less prevalent than on the Continent and in America it has not

been greatly used, but elsewhere drugs are often conveyed in this way, a packet being dropped by a 'plane at an agreed rendezvous where an agent is ready to pick it up.

This part of the work might be described as the wholesale distribution. As with other trades there exist the manufacturer, the wholesaler, and the retailer. Two pounds of morphine can be manufactured for £10. It is sold for £60. When it reaches the retailer he adulterates it with perhaps 80 per cent. of quinine or starch and sells it for as much as a shilling for a pinch to addicts who will pay anything to satisfy their craving.

The retail distributor often chooses strange places to transact his business. It is not generally known that a few years ago the foot of Nurse Cavell's monument was used as a rendezvous for the illicit drug retailer and his clients. The one thing the transactor of such business fears is to be caught within four walls. As long as he is in the open there is some chance if he is suspected and sees that a challenge is inevitable of making good his escape. Caught in a room he is trapped.

Cunning as he is, it is these small retailers who run the greatest risk of falling into the hands of the police. Like the fence, however, they are very difficult to convict. They are always men who ostensibly, and often genuinely, carry on some legitimate occupation. Illicit supplies reach them by a thousand devious routes. It is a ready-money business; its means of communication are either verbal or confined to the personal columns of the newspapers. Further, like the fence, they are practically immune from the danger of denunciation since their clients also have embarrassing secrets to conceal.

The police laboratory is often able to supply evidence against these paltry smugglers which is obtainable in no other way. At the Laboratory of Technical Police in Lyon we have had experience of individuals detained on suspicion of trafficking in drugs. No supplies of narcotic material have been found upon them and none in their houses. But an examination of the dust in their clothing, particularly in the pockets, has revealed on chemical analysis unmistakable traces of narcotic drugs. Similar cases occasionally arise in this country. Four months ago Mr. Nichols of the Government Laboratory and Police College gave evidence regarding the examination of the clothing of a suspected trafficker in drugs. Traces of a narcotic were found. The accused was convicted.

But it is not sufficient to deal with this end-product of an

organisation if its roots remain untouched. The League of Nations has dealt with this problem in a manner which would not have been possible if the interested nations had acted individually. Russell Pasha, who has done so much towards the suppression of the traffic not only in Egypt but internationally, has shown that with the increase in the number of convictions for trafficking in drugs, drug addiction has progressively decreased. The figures for Egypt, a country where the traffic is particularly prevalent, are significant. In 1929 there were 1,293 convictions for trafficking in drugs. The number of addicts registered was 5,238. 1932 was the peak year for convictions, which numbered 4,650. The figure for addicts was 1,924. In 1934 convictions had fallen to 2,817 and addiction to 556. The fall was due not to the decreased vigilance on the part of the police, but to an actual decrease in the number of traffickers and the volume of illicit material distributed. These statistics speak eloquently for themselves.

But this decrease in the traffic is not due alone to greater vigilance or increased efficiency of the police in dealing with the trafficker. Egypt is in this connection an index of the success of the campaign against the European drug barons whose activities have been restricted in one country after another. Effective interference with the sources of supply is the basic cause of the decreased traffic.

It would be dangerous complacently to assume that the peril is at an end. From top to bottom the drug runners are resourceful and dangerous men. The business is too profitable to abandon without a struggle. Now that the countries which permitted or winked at the inefficiently controlled manufacture of drugs have made restriction effective, illicit manufacture on a larger scale is being organised.

It is fashionable in some quarters to sneer at the League of Nations, maliciously to exaggerate every aspect of its supposed ineffectiveness and to remain silent regarding its achievements. The figures quoted provide one significant illustration of its success. This is at least certain. Without international co-operation the drug traffic, which may become as great a menace to civilisation as war, cannot be controlled. Because international co-operation has been applied to this problem civilisation has won the first round against those who for the sake of enriching themselves would help to undermine it. But these disintegrating forces have been repulsed and not defeated. If international co-operation does not continue at Geneva the issue may again be in jeopardy.

## INTERLUDE AT SANT'ANNA.

BY M. DE B. DALY.

## I.

MAJOR EVERARD TANCRED was a little tired as he turned in at the side gate of the 'Pension Scarelli' after a twelve-hours' tramp over the hills of Sant'Anna. The prospect of a hot bath, an excellent dinner, a book, a pipe, and early bed was pleasant. He thought pityingly of his friend Charsley, who had left him to take the road up to the 'Hotel Majestic' and who must spend three or four hours in the bridge-room before he earned his night's rest. Major Tancred was lacking in a card-sense; he spoke of bridge as a 'parlour game' and thought it a great waste of time. Charsley, late of the Indian Civil Service (Woods and Forests), was a good player and much in request; he made it a rule not to play by day, so that he and Tancred could walk or golf together, but he seldom missed an evening. Tancred spoke scoffingly of this habit, but as his means did not allow him to stay at the 'Majestic,' he was not irritated by the sight of his friend's folly.

From an upper window in the *pension* a housemaid spied the returning walker, and called down the staircase:

'Here is the Major! His telegram! Quick! The Major's telegram!'

Telegrams were considered too important at Casa Scarelli to be placed in the pigeon-holes amongst the ordinary mail, so nobody was quite sure where it was. The *padrone*, who had signed for it, was out, and it could not be found in the Major's room. Everybody ran hither and thither looking for it. Then Paolina, the cook, had a brainwave, and dashed as fast as her girth would allow to the dining-room, and there, in the corner of the gilt frame of the looking-glass near the Major's table, was the telegram. She seized it triumphantly, and no one disputed that she had earned the right to deliver it to the Major.

It was a lovely evening, and the wanderer sauntered up the path of old Carlo Scarelli's kitchen garden feeling at peace with the world. The front garden, forlorn and dilapidated in the winter, was now a scintillating tangle of stocks and coronilla, iris, spiræa

and salvia, wistaria and roses, but the Major's orderly mind enjoyed the kitchen garden. The plants were so well spaced and carefully trimmed that the rectangular beds looked like platoons of well-drilled soldiers. The peas were neatly staked and cat's-cradled, the runners carefully trained up their canes, cauliflowers and broccoli were straightened, leeks trenched, celery banked, and even the plumed fronds of carrots were thinned into moderation. Only the great marrows with their huge hairy leaves and irrepressible fruit were too exuberant to be disciplined, and Papà Scarelli banished them to a distant pergola, where they clambered unchecked, producing enormous yellow *zucchi*, which served for mysterious kitchen purposes throughout the winter.

Paolina came waddling down the path, waving the telegram. The Major read it.

'I have decided to come and stay at Sant'Anna for a time. Please book me good south room in your *pension* with large balcony and bathroom and carpet covering whole floor and room near for Hawkins and Williams can put up at the hotel as you have no garage Margaret.'

How like Margaret! A number of unnecessary words, most of them *and*, with no mention of when she was coming or how long she would stay. She might be meaning to spend weeks or months, or (what was more likely) only a couple of nights on her way to Florence. He would be dutifully pleased to see his sister, but he was very doubtful if she would like the little 'Pension Scarelli.' Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong was a wealthy widow, who had married while he was still at school, though she now never mentioned the fact, and cleverly managed to convey the impression that the ten years' difference in their ages was in her favour. They only knew each other slightly, for the sister had lived in the north of England, while military service and later bad health had kept the brother almost always abroad. He turned to Paolina.

'When did this come?'

'Quite early this morning, Signore. And the lady arrived this afternoon.'

'What! She is here already? Why didn't you say so?'

He began to walk briskly up the path, Paolina following, extrapolating that she had supposed the telegram would tell him all about it.

As he stood jerking the knapsack off his shoulders in the dark

entrance he was aware of unusual activities in the *pension*. Giovanni came running downstairs with a little ladder and an important air; he did not even stop to enquire about the expedition. Teresa, rather inefficiently helped by one of the children usually to be found in or near the kitchen, went in the opposite direction carrying an easy chair from the *salottino*. There was a noise of hammering on the first floor.

Signora Scarelli emerged from the little den where she spent several hours every day trying to make her books meet the requirements of the tax agents.

'Oh, Signor Maggiore!' she exclaimed. 'What an honour! Your lady sister has arrived! She is a magnificent woman! So majestic! Such a grand lady! You must be very happy to have this news!'

The Major said he was, and hoped the Signora had been able to give his sister a good room. Her face fell a little, and she shrugged her shoulders.

'Perhaps the Casa Scarelli is not quite what your lady sister expected. It is sad that it is not next year when, if God wills, we shall have hot and cold water in the rooms.'

Subject to Divine will, this luxury had been promised to the guests at the *pension* for some years, but so far Heaven frowned on the project.

'You give us plenty of hot water, Signora,' said the Major, hoping his sister had not hurt her feelings.

'Ah, Signore, I must study all wishes! I know that Germans want quantities of food, Italians good cooking, and English are only contented if they have plenty of hot water.'

'And you satisfy us all,' Major Tancred tactfully and quite sincerely told her. 'Where is my sister? As soon as I have had a wash I will go and see her.'

'You have not met for three years, and now you must wash!'  
The Signora was a little shocked at this exhibition of callousness. 'She is, of course, in Number five, which was vacant by a miracle. Ah, here is the *Dama di compagnia* of Miladi!' With marvellous dexterity she managed in one phrase to raise the social rank both of the Major's sister and of her attendant.

Hawkins, Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong's elderly maid, had a haughty look which seemed to justify the Signora's description, but she spoke to Major Tancred in the correct, repressed tone of the upper-class English servant.



'Good afternoon, sir. Madam would be pleased to see you in a quarter of an hour. She asked me to say she will have tea for you.'

'Hullo, Hawkins, how are you? Glad to see you're still looking after Mrs. Armstrong. She'd be lost without you. Tell her I'll be with her in a quarter of an hour.'

As he ran upstairs he wondered how these English servants managed to be so impersonal. The better they were, the less you knew about them. Each time he returned to the *pension* he wanted to know all that had happened in the lives of the Scarelli and their staff during his absence, and they were always brimming over with news for him. He had known Hawkins—that is, he had seen her—from time to time since he was a boy, but had no idea whether she were maid, wife, or widow, clever or stupid, happy or unhappy, or even if she had a Christian name, though he supposed she had.

One look at the *salotto* and *salottino* with walls painted to represent draped crimson curtains, and hideously uncomfortable chairs set round a centre table, had made Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong declare that a private sitting-room was an absolute necessity. Both family and staff were anxious to retain a rich and great lady, and also to please 'la sorella del Maggiore.' The room next Number five was hastily denuded of bedroom furniture, which was replaced by a sofa and armchairs from here and there, a plant was placed on a marble-topped consol, and the pictures considered by the Signora essential to a sitting-room were hung. The Major found his sister comfortably stretched on a chaise-longue, with a chair for her brother near her and a well-furnished tea tray at her side. She greeted him affectionately.

'My dear Everard, how nice to see you! And you are really looking very well, in spite of all!'

'And why should I not?' he asked as he bent to give her a fraternal kiss.

'You're so ascetic, my dear boy! I'm sure I can't think how you manage to live this simple life! And with no distractions! But then of course you are *clever*!' Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong managed to be almost offensive when she accused anyone of cleverness. No one, perhaps not even she herself, quite knew what she meant, but it was certainly not flattering. She had always suspected her brother Everard of 'cleverness,' and was confirmed in this poor opinion of him when, after being invalided out of the army, he took to writing for reviews.

Although sarcasm was foreign to him, he replied, as he had often done before :

‘Clever, my dear Margaret! When I can’t even play your favourite card-game!’

‘Ah, that reminds me!’ she said, as she poured out a cup of tea. ‘Are there any bridge players here? Contract, of course.’

‘My friend Charsley is good, I’m told. I’ll ask him to dinner to-morrow, and you can make up a hand with him and the Dugans. They are whales at the game, I believe.’

Although a most amiable man, Major Tancred’s allusions to bridge-addicts were hardly less contemptuous than those of his sister to clever people, but he felt he must do his best to amuse her. It was very good of her to come to Sant’Anna to see him. She only intended, it seemed, to stay a few days, and he wanted to make her visit pleasant. He did not admit that he was glad it was to be short, but had he not thought so, he would have been less ready to indulge her.

He reckoned without Paolina.

Paolina, the widow of a famous chef, was herself a really wonderful cook, and was spurred to special efforts by the arrival of a very grand lady with a magnificent car, an imposing chauffeur, and a lady’s maid. On the second day after her arrival Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong attacked her brother with rather elephantine humour.

‘My dear Everard, I always say men are slaves to their stomachs! Even you, with all your cleverness, have not a soul above food! Now I know why you spend most of the year in this extraordinary little place! I can hardly blame you!’

Her brother was frankly amazed. ‘My dear Margaret, I am delighted you appreciate Paolina’s talent. Yes, I have noticed she is a good cook, but I assure you I settled here before she came, and I should not go if she left.’

‘Don’t tell me you don’t care what you eat, Everard, for I couldn’t believe you. I myself care very much, and though this *pension* is otherwise appalling, I must say the cooking’s a dream. And I can get some good bridge.’

The few days which Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong had intended to spend in the dull little hole on the Italian Riviera (as she had always called her brother’s choice of a home) became a fortnight. For the first few days Tancred gave up his walks and his golf to be with her. She never went anywhere on foot if she could drive, and her brother never drove if he could walk. He did not

therefore prove a good guide to the places visited in her Daimler, and she soon found it better to take acquaintances made at the bridge table. There were, to her rather uncomplimentary surprise, several good players in Sant'Anna, and she spent every evening and most afternoons at the game. She was a late riser, and this did not leave her much time for anything else. Her brother, feeling he had done his duty by her, returned thankfully to his walks and his golf with his friend Charsley.

John Charsley was a big man of unconventional ideas and sometimes manners. His origin—he was of modest commercial stock—and whole outlook were different from those of his friend. The Tancreds had always been soldiers, and Everard Tancred had an orthodox and well-regulated mind; though barely middle-aged, his manners and many of his opinions were a generation behind the times, but everybody liked him for his kindness and simplicity. In spite, or perhaps because, of these differences, the two men had been friends since their school days. When the Indian Army claimed one and the Indian Civil Service the other, they still kept in touch. Even marriage had not severed their friendship, and when both retired as childless widowers they fixed together on Sant'Anna as the place where they could best escape the English climate.

When, a couple of weeks after Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong's arrival, Charsley made a bridge engagement the excuse for not playing golf, Tancred was annoyed. It added insult to injury that the bridge party was to be given by his sister. He expostulated with her at lunch.

'If you like to stay in a stuffy room fumbling with cards instead of being in the open air,' he said, 'that's your affair, but it's too bad to insist on poor Charsley doing the same. He's a man of healthy tastes.'

'Really, Everard, there's no need to imply that mine are unhealthy, or that I don't know how to hold my cards! Mr. Charsley is at perfect liberty to stay in the open air kicking—I mean knocking—a ball about, but this afternoon he prefers to play bridge. Of course,' she added with Parthian effect, 'a man so clever that he writes for quarterlies may need golf as a complete rest for his brains, but your nice Mr. Charsley is quite able to play an intelligent game of bridge.'

Tancred realised that he had been less than polite and apologised, but went off to the golf club with a feeling of injury,

quite convinced that his sister had made it impossible for Charsley to refuse her invitation.

## II.

Hawkins (whose Christian name was Emma) did not like Sant'Anna, and positively detested the 'Pension Scarelli.' The place was neither town nor village, and the *pension* quite unsuitable for the owner of Rowsell Park. She was, indeed, glad that Sant'Anna was not a village, for, from what she had seen of them in Italy, they were made up of dark dens, joined by tunnels and arches, which smelled vilely. As a town it was incomplete; there were shops, and even plate-glass windows, but window-dressing was an unknown art; the best draper liked to fill his window with bales of blankets, boxes of shirts, and pyramids of towels. Although it was by the seaside, there was no pier, no sand, and not even a tide; tides might sometimes be inconvenient, but a sea which remained always in the same place was no better than a pond. There was a cinema, but unfortunately it was in Italian.

Sant'Anna might have been tolerable if they had been staying at the 'Hotel Majestic,' with its revolving glass door and its frock-coated concierge. That was the sort of place to which she was accustomed. Of course, poor Mr. Everard, with his beggarly pension (as her mistress said), could not afford the 'Majestic,' but surely it would have been better if Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong (of Rowsell Park, Rowsell) had stayed at the hotel, and asked him to lunch every day. It was really humiliating to be at a place where there was no lift, no running water, and no ironing-room, where the proprietor's father was the gardener and he himself waited at table.

After enduring Sant'Anna for a fortnight, Hawkins decided that they must move on to Florence, which she believed to be a civilised city, and where at least they would not stay in a boarding-house. She had learned to manage her mistress, by no means an amenable woman, very cleverly, but this time she was not successful. Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong was impervious alike to pity for her own discomfort and hints of her maid's sufferings. She declared that she was glad there was no lift, as the slight effort of mounting to the first floor was good exercise after Paolina's extraordinarily good food. So quaint to know the cook's name, and that she was a woman! Did she wear a chef's cap? As for hot water, with a bathroom just down the passage and a tap outside

the door of No. 5, she managed very well, and surely Hawkins was not getting so old she could not carry a jug a few steps? The lack of an ironing-room could be put right at once, for that very obliging woman, Signora Scarelli, had promised a padded board and an electric iron that could be fitted to the plug in Hawkins's room. After all, concluded Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong, one must rough it a bit when one goes abroad, and it is so very interesting to see how the natives live. The conviction that she was doing so gave her the feeling that she was an explorer, and she sometimes said to her brother:

'I wonder you don't write about your quaint experiences among the natives, Everard. I'm sure I should if I had your brains. Indeed, I daresay I could write without being as clever as you, but *I* never have time for that sort of thing.'

Hawkins had one consolation for the drawbacks of Casa Scarelli. Through Williams, Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong's chauffeur, she met very pleasant company at the 'Hotel Majestic.' A few English maids, an Italian valet, and chauffeurs of various nationalities invited her to join them whenever they and she had leisure. She was relieved to find that no stigma attached to her for her humble lodgings. Williams, who looked like an admiral in undress uniform, and his splendid Daimler quite fixed the social importance of Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong. They recognised that family affection accounted for her strange choice of abode. It was a little hard on Miss Hawkins, they agreed, but there's always something to put up with, and each of the lady's maids was sure that Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong had not the peculiarly trying defects of her own mistress.

Hawkins was very proud of the fact that she never gossiped about her employer, but truthfully said that it was impossible to put cotton-wool in her ears every time other people chattered. As well be deaf. It was at the 'Majestic' that she heard suggestions and innuendoes that made her fear that Sant'Anna might prove worse than merely boring. Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong was a handsome woman, looking much less than her age, who made herself very pleasant to men. From time to time she had toyed with the idea of re-marrying. Hitherto her philanderings had come to nothing, but boxed up in this little Italian town, anything might happen. Hawkins had a low opinion of men, especially husbands, and had no intention of sharing her mistress's confidence with one. Something would have to be done.

The Major, poor innocent (thought Hawkins), was far too simple-minded to suspect anything. It would be hard luck on him, so she'd just give him a hint, and then if he did nothing she would . . . what exactly she would do required thought, but whatever it was, Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong would leave Sant'Anna no nearer matrimony than she had arrived there.

The next morning, as she passed through the entrance, Major Tancred was waiting for the paper bag of lunch which Paolina was preparing for him. He gave her his usual pleasant smile.

'Good morning, Hawkins. A lovely day for my walk, isn't it? Tell Mrs. Armstrong not to wait tea for me. I may not be back.'

'Very well, sir. But I think Madam is expecting friends for bridge this afternoon. Mr. and Miss Cheriton and Mr. Charsley.'

The Major pulled out his little engagement book.

'Not Mr. Charsley, I'm sure. He is coming—— No, dash it all, Hawkins, you're right! I've made a mistake in the day we were to go to Colbasso! Do you think Mrs. Armstrong could find someone else?'

'Oh, no, sir!' exclaimed Hawkins in a shocked voice. 'Mrs. Armstrong arranges her bridge most carefully. And even if she didn't, sir, I don't think anyone could take the place of Mr. Charsley!'

Hawkins made this remark in such a significant tone that even the unsuspicious Major wondered what she meant.

'Oh, come,' he expostulated, 'Mr. Charsley's not the eighth wonder. I believe Colonel Dugan's just as good a player.'

Hawkins decided to burn her boats.

'I daresay, sir. Better, I'm told. But Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong always asks Mr. Charsley. She thinks a lot of him *in every way*.'

Without for the moment understanding the implication, the Major realised that he was discussing his sister with her maid, and said rather stiffly:

'Well, Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong must invite whom she pleases. It was my mistake. Colbasso must wait. I'll go somewhere else to-day. Here is my lunch. Tell her I shan't be back until after her party's begun.'

He strode off, frowning as he lit his pipe. What did the woman mean? Was she suggesting——? Like her impertinence! Could there be anything in such an idea? It was fantastic! Margaret lived for amusement, cards, entertaining, and being

entertained. Charsley, though a good, was not an ardent bridge-player, and preferred out-of-door interests, golf, climbing, sketching, botany. He was even rather ill at ease in society. Everard Tancred's thoughts turned to himself. Sant'Anna without Charsley would be unspeakably dull. If old Char went, he would go, and he hated changes. He was oppressed all day by Hawkins's unpleasant hints, but resolved that matters must take their course. If Charsley were fool enough—he amended the ungallant thought—if Margaret were fool enough. . . . But probably Hawkins was talking through her hat. Ladies' maids notoriously gossip.

### III.

The Scarelli family was beginning to think in terms not only of hot-and-cold-water pipes, but of a new entrance and a built-out dining-room. Luck had turned.

First there was miladi—nothing would induce them to speak of her otherwise—who paid for dozens of extras in her weekly bill without a word of comment, and now a French viscount had arrived in a racing motor! He would surely live up to the same standard.

M. de Becquérault was exactly what a French viscount might be expected to be. Small, dark, vivacious, with glossy black hair—he was well under forty—and a tiny moustache. He was only incomplete as a stage Frenchman because he did not shrug his shoulders, gesticulate, or speak broken English. He spoke it so well, indeed, that there was even a slight trace of a Cockney accent. Like many Frenchmen, he spoke Italian fluently.

Major Tancred, a man of robust British prejudices, called him a decorative jackanapes, but his sister said she thought him charming, and a very pleasant change from the other people in the *pension*, who were certainly not decorative. When she heard from Colonel Dugan that the new-comer was also a keen bridge-player she approved of him still more. Formalities were soon overcome in the little *pension*, and the day after his arrival the Vicomte was playing bridge with Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong, Colonel Dugan and John Charsley. He proved much the best player at the table, and Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong, who was his partner, won an unusually large sum. Her bridge winnings were of no account in her expenditure, but she was as delighted as if she had been dependent on them.

The bridge set at Sant'Anna was stimulated to even greater

activity by the arrival of the Vicomte de Becquérault. Charsley, unwilling to seem less keen than the new-comer, forsook his plea for fresh air in the daytime, and Tancred went for solitary walks or played golf with other men. A slight coolness rose between them, as Tancred was hurt at his friend's defection, and Charsley was trying to persuade himself that this was unreasonable. They were, however, agreed in a hearty dislike of the Frenchman. It was not logical to dislike a man only because he was good-looking in a small dark fashion, had exquisite manners, and coats cut with a decided waist, but he gave them no other cause.

After the arrival of the decorative Frenchman Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong spoke even less of moving on to Florence. She was frankly enjoying the fact that the only two unattached men in Sant'Anna were showing her marked attention. One or other, and sometimes both, of them escorted her to and from every game of bridge outside the 'Scarelli.' The Frenchman sent her flowers, the Englishman brought her books; M. de Becquérault read her the latest news from the Italian papers, translating at sight with complete fluency; Charsley, who was a clever draughtsman, asked her advice about his sketches.

Even Tancred, utterly adverse to gossip, could not help knowing that it was rife. 'The Anglo-French Matrimonial Stakes,' as the comic man of the place had called them, conveniently absorbed sporting interest after the Grand National had been run. The Frenchman, with his polished manners and amusing conversation, would have been favourite had he been a little older; John Charsley's nationality secured him the backing of those to whom it seemed incredible that a sensible Englishwoman could prefer a foreigner, but they admitted that socially he was at a disadvantage. Tancred was very depressed. He frankly detested the idea of de Becquérault as a brother-in-law, yet knew too that the fine flavour of his friendship with Charsley would not survive that awkward relationship. He tried to put his own feelings aside, and consider his sister's happiness, but could not see it in marriage with either man. It was with mingled feelings that he saw the Frenchman drawing ahead.

The affairs of the employing class had the usual fascination for the employed, and speculation was keen in the sitting-room reserved at the 'Majestic' for the retainers of guests. It was tantalising that Miss Hawkins, a frequent visitor there, who could have been a useful source of information, was unapproachable.



Not only was she impervious to hints, she was even very unpleasant to a young woman who spoke of Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong as a 'baby-snatcher.'

'I suppose, Miss Deane,' she said in her most superior manner, 'that both my lady and the French gentleman have shown you their passports? Very kind of them, I'm sure.'

'Well,' retorted Miss Deane pertly, 'it doesn't need passports to see that Madam should be adopting a son instead of angling for a husband!'

'When you're old enough to judge, Miss Deane, you will know that a few years one way or the other make no difference. And my lord the Viscount shows his good taste in admiring a woman who has reached a sensible age, and not some fibbertigibbet girl in her twenties.'

Miss Deane considered the early twenties so patently superior to the late fifties that she did not even discuss the point, but seized eagerly on the possible tip.

'Then you think the Viscount is in the running, Miss Hawkins?' she demanded.

'Miss Deane, I know my job and my duty, which is more than anyone can say of you. I mind my own business and will trouble you to mind yours!'

This put a stopper on Miss Deane's thirst for information, and she had to content herself with muttering that sour old cats always miau.

#### IV.

Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong decided to give a large bridge-party. The crimson-draped rooms of the 'Pension Scarelli' being quite inadequate, she made arrangements at the 'Hotel Majestic.' Signora Scarelli's chagrin was soothed by the Major.

'You give us "home comforts," Signora, and it would not be a bit comfortable for your guests to be turned out of their sitting-rooms to make place for these card-players. I for one, while they are playing, shall sit at ease in your *salottino*, just as if I were in my own house!'

The Signora was appeased, but thought regretfully of the good money Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong would pay to the 'Majestic' for a supper by which Paolina could have covered herself and the house with glory.

The party was to be superior to any yet given in Sant'Anna

Bridge was to be preceded by a dinner-party of a dozen selected guests and followed by a buffet supper to which even a few uninitiate were invited. The Major agreed to act as host, provided he might disappear while cards were in play.

Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong interviewed both the chef and the *maître d'hôtel*. She gave the former careful instructions about the iced and hot *tasses de bouillon royale* with which supper was to start, and presented the *maître d'hôtel* with a very special recipe for champagne cup. The chef thought the advice superfluous, but in expectation of a generous tip took it meekly, while the *maître d'hôtel*, though charging for the best French vintage, was generous with *asti spumante*.

After a dinner much longer than he liked, the Major returned with a sigh of relief to the 'Pension Scarelli,' and sat with a book in the *salottino* to prove his appreciation of home comforts. After midnight he reluctantly went back to the hotel, and found his sister and her guests just assembling in the supper-room. Concealing his dislike of lobster mayonnaise and iced asparagus in the middle of the night, he did his best to play the convivial host. Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong begged for commendation of her champagne cup, and glasses were filled and re-filled. The *maître d'hôtel* had atoned for the change of vintage by an extra quantity of rum; there was much merriment and laughter, talkative people shouted, silent people chattered, and few of either listened. The hostess went from guest to guest urging them to taste this and that, and 'just a drop more of my very special cup' to go with it. Tancred was an abstemious man, both by taste and necessity—he was not going to invite return of an almost cured trouble by eating and drinking more than he wanted—and refused to be tempted. No one, of course, was drunk, but he was probably the only entirely sober person in the room. It was certainly not like Charsley, a gauche and retiring man, suddenly to clap his hands, and shout in stentorian tones:

'And now let's sing "For she's a jolly good fellow" !'

There were roars of applause, and the old catch was bellowed forth, with many 'tum-te-tums' from those who remembered the tune but forgot the words. The manager and *maître d'hôtel*, looking on, were a little scared at the prospect of complaints next day from disturbed guests, but there was nothing to be done.

Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong, magnificently arrayed in gold lamé, stood in the middle of her guests, beaming with pride. Before

the last note had died away the Vicomte de Becquérault ran forward, seized her hand, and stood, holding his glass high as he shouted :

‘No! No! She is not a “jolly good fellow”! That is a libel! A shocking libel! She is a beautiful and wonderful lady! I adore her! She is ravishing! I lay my heart before her!’

He fell dramatically on one knee, and kissed the hand he held.

Amazed, bewildered, almost stunned, no one spoke. Such a scene among a number of normal, well-behaved Britons seemed impossible. Charsley glared at the Frenchman, who had jumped lightly to his feet and stood, still hand in hand, by his wonderful lady's side. Everard Tancred, sick at heart, was about to go to his sister when there was a little stir at the big glass doors of the restaurant. As if parted by Moses' rod, the guests fell to one side and the other. In the doorway stood a tall gaunt English-woman in a high-necked black dress, a glittering wrap over one arm while with the other she pointed at the couple in the middle of the room. The amazing words she spoke were long remembered by all there.

‘Jean Becquérault, you forget yourself! Be off with you!’

She turned to Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong.

‘It is very late, madam. I have brought your cloak, and Williams is ready.’

To the astonishment of all, the Vicomte dropped the hand he held and stared at her like a scolded boy. Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong, who had seemed to enjoy the theatrical gesture of the Frenchman, looked at him scornfully, and then turned furiously to Hawkins.

‘It is you who forget yourself, Hawkins! What do you mean by coming in like this?’

In the same respectful tone, Hawkins replied :

‘You must excuse me, madam, but I saw that my husband had had too much to drink. If you will excuse him, he'd better go and sleep it off.’

Before anyone else could speak Major Tancred took his sister's arm, and said in his quiet, well-bred voice :

‘We've all got a bit excited, haven't we? It's late, and you won't think me inhospitable if I say we'd better go off to bed. We are keeping the servants here up very late, and I hope we haven't wakened the visitors in the hotel.’

‘It's been a delightful evening,’ began Mrs. Dugan, and the

other guests followed her example in uttering the usual conventionalities. There were several doors from the room, and no one saw which of them provided an exit for the Vicomte de Becquérault.

Mrs. Bewlay-Armstrong, her heightened colour showing through her careful make-up, smiled graciously and murmured her pleasure to each guest in turn, but when the last had left the room she sank into an armchair and burst into tears. Her brother, embarrassed, tired, and worried, vainly tried to soothe her, but Hawkins quietly put the cloak round her mistress's shaking shoulders saying :

'You've had a tiring evening, madam. You'll be glad to get away, I'm sure.'

Mrs. Armstrong gave a gulp, looked up at her brother, and recovered herself.

'I'm sorry, Everard. I really think the champagne went to my head. And Hawkins's extraordinary behaviour——'

'Hawkins will explain in the morning,' her brother said firmly, and gently raising her, gave her his arm. They left the room, Hawkins following discreetly.

## V.

'Yes, sir, quite true. Him and me was married fifteen years ago last August.'

The breakdown in Hawkins's usually irreproachable grammar was the only sign of her agitation as she sat facing Major Everard in the *salottino* on the morning after the party at the 'Majestic.' He had sent for her, risen at her entrance, pulled forward a chair, and reseated himself. With one finger keeping the place in his book, a pipe in his other hand, he quietly questioned her.

'Fifteen years ago! That was in Mr. Bewlay-Armstrong's lifetime?'

'Yes, sir. You know, soon after Miss Margaret married I left her. I couldn't do with no husbands. Yet I was fool enough, Mr. Everard, to get one myself. A bit younger than me too. A courier.'

Major Tancred's eyebrows went up and a smile lurked in his eyes as he said kindly :

'Poor Hawkins. You made a mess of it, I fear. And the scamp treated you badly?'

Hawkins pulled down the corners of her mouth.

'Not as an Englishwoman expects to be treated, Mr. Everard.'

'Then he *is* a Frenchman?'

'He's a French frog all right, sir, born in London. His mother was an Italian.'

'Is he a viscount?'

'Only when his gambling brings him in a spot of cash, sir. I married him as Jean Becquérault. It's an outlandish name, but his own.'

'Then you are Mme Becquérault?'

'Mrs. Becquérault, sir. We were married in London, and often I thank heaven I had that much sense. When he left me six months after the wedding I took my own name again, and when Mr. Bewlay-Armstrong died I wrote to Miss Margaret, and asked if I could go back.'

'Did you tell her the story?'

'I told her I'd got married, and he'd left me for good, though bad is more like it. I didn't tell her he was a Frenchman. I wasn't too proud of it, and that's a fact.'

'Curious he should turn up here,' remarked Major Tancred, looking straight at her. Hawkins hesitated, saw his kind face, and burst out:

'Oh, Mr. Everard, sir, don't let on to Miss Margaret as I asked him to come! I was that worried, because I thought if there was only one pebble on the beach she might go marrying again. I had seen Jean's name in the paper. He was at Monte Carlo. And I wrote him. I knew he could cut out—begging your pardon, sir—Mr. Charsley, and I could send him off when he'd done it.'

'Quite an obliging husband, after all, Hawkins!'

'Well, sir, to tell you the truth, I could make matters nasty for him with his present wife.'

'Ho—ho! So the gentleman's a bigamist?'

'She's only a French wife, sir,' replied Hawkins tolerantly.

'I don't bear her no grudge, poor thing.'

The Major puffed thoughtfully.

'And what's to happen now?'

'Madam has decided to move on to Florence, sir,' replied Hawkins, recovering her office with a jerk. 'I have begun to pack, and we shall probably leave on Wednesday.'

'Then,' thought the selfish Major, his spirits rising, 'on Thursday Charsley and I will be able to go to Colbasso.'

*Bordighera.*

## OLD LONDON COFFEE-HOUSES.

BY HENRY M. GREY.

LOOKING back at the life of our forefathers two and a half centuries ago, there is scarcely a more interesting feature, from the sociological point of view, than the coffee-house. In the words of Isaac D'Israeli, 'the history of coffee-houses ere the invention of clubs was that of the manners, the morals, and the politics of a people.' The coffee-house in London was an institution to which history can show no parallel. It entered into, and became an integral part of, the social, commercial, literary and political life of the time, and for a hundred years and more—i.e. from the days of the Commonwealth until well into the reign of George III—it was a power in the land. Open to every man who chose to pay his penny at the bar, the coffee-house entertained every class, and heard every shade of opinion. It was at once a house of refreshment, a debating society, a mart, a club-house and a newsroom. So popular a resort was it at one time, and so regular in their attendance were its patrons, that a stranger, wishing to meet a particular person, asked not where he dwelt but which coffee-house he frequented.

How came they into being?

The first man known to have drunk coffee in England was one, Nathaniel Canopios, a Cretan, who for some years was at Balliol College, Oxford. In what capacity he was there the records do not tell us, except that he was sent there by Archbishop Laud. Mention is made of this individual by Evelyn in his *Diary* under date of May 10, 1637, while another chronicler of the period records that Canopios was expelled the University during the civil troubles in 1648, but that while he was in Balliol College 'he made the drink for his own use called coffee, and usually drank it every morning, being the first, as the antients of that house have informed me, that was ever drank in Oxon.'

Two years after the expulsion of Canopios by the Parliamentary Visitors a house was opened in Oxford by a Jew, named Jacob, where the strange beverage 'was, by some who delighted in noveltie, drank.' But London had to wait until the year 1652 before its first coffee-house was established.

An English merchant of the name of Edwards had been resident in Smyrna for some years and grown accustomed to the use of coffee there. From Arabia, the home of the coffee plant, to Egypt is not a far cry, and thence to Turkey and Asia Minor is an easy transition. In any case, the beverage was well known in the Levant and Italy long before Western Europe became acquainted with it.

Upon Mr. Edwards's return to England he was welcomed by a number of friends, prominent among whom was a Mr. Hodges, an Alderman of the City of London. These friends he was in the habit of regaling with the new black liquor, prepared by his servant, Pasqua Rosee, a native of Ragusa, Edwards himself partaking of the beverage two or three times a day. The new drink quickly became popular, and Edwards found that the keeping of open house became rather a nuisance and an expense, besides taking up too much of his time. He, therefore, hit upon the expedient of setting up his servant, Pasqua, in an establishment of his own in St. Michael's Alley, Cornhill, to which all and sundry could resort for the consumption of the new and increasingly favoured beverage. Pasqua's bill advertising the merits of his speciality contained a misstatement in the very first paragraph. It was headed: 'The Vertue of the Coffee drink. First publicly made and sold in England by Pasqua Rosee.'

As already shown, he had been forestalled in that claim by the Jew Jacob at Oxford by two years. But probably the worthy Ragusan knew nothing of this, and he proceeded in this 'puff' of his to put forward the most extravagant claims for the new beverage. The modern pill vendor in a country market-place could teach him nothing. Apart from helping digestion, quickening the spirits and making the heart lightsome, 'it is good against sore eyes, and the better if you hold your head over it and take in the steem that way.' Further, it was alleged to be good for headache, consumption, coughs, king's evil (otherwise scrofula), dropsy and gout. In short, it was stated to be a sovereign specific against practically all the ills to which flesh is heir, and—strange to read—it was claimed to have the most wonderful effect upon the outward appearance of a person, for 'in Turkey, where it is generally drunk, their skins are exceeding white and clear.' This is not a generally recognised feature of the Turk as we know him, and it would be rather interesting to hear the views of, say, an Anzac who was with Allenby in Palestine during the War, upon this racial claim.

The fame of this marvellous liquor was quickly spread abroad,

and the success of the new venture seemed to be assured; but trouble soon threatened. The tavern-keepers, alarmed at the competition from this new quarter, petitioned the Lord Mayor, pointing out that Pasqua was a foreigner and 'no freeman,' and had no right to carry on this trade. Edwards and Hodges came to the rescue. The 'Turkey merchant' had recently married Alderman Hodges' daughter, and suggested that his father-in-law should dispense with the services of his coachman, Bowman, qualifying him as a freeman, and setting him up as Pasqua's partner in the coffee-house. This plan was adopted, and the business was saved. The coffee-house had come to stay.

The partners, however, were not happy together. Quarrels ensued, the upshot of which was that Bowman set up a rival establishment in the Alley right opposite Pasqua's, and the latter soon afterwards retired to the Continent. Possibly, he opened a similar business in Holland, to which country he is believed to have migrated, but, anyhow, London knew him no more. His rival having left the field, Bowman seems to have enjoyed considerable success, his regular customers—so the report went—numbering, at one time, nearly a thousand.

For two whole years he would appear to have enjoyed almost a monopoly, for the next establishment we hear of was opened by James Farr, at the sign of the 'Rainbow' by Inner Temple Gate in Fleet Street—a sign which is still to be seen over the door, but stronger liquors than coffee are sold there to-day. This was in 1656, but history does not tell us how the worthy Farr came to have any knowledge of the making of coffee, for his occupation hitherto had been that of a barber. He, too, seems to have prospered in his new trade, but not for long, however, was he left in peace. In December, 1657, a complaint against him was lodged in the following terms:

'Disorders and Annoys. Item, we pr'sent (i.e. prosecute) James Ffarr, barber, for makeinge and selling of a drink called coffee, whereby in makeinge the same, he annoyeth his neighbours by evil smells, and for keeping of ffire for the most part night and day, whereby his chimney and chamber hath been sett on ffire, to the great danger and affrightment of his neighbrs. Witness and compts. Mr Ro. Meade, Mr John Rae, Mr Daniel Pakeman, Mr. William Leake and Widd. Lashley.'<sup>1</sup>

There is no reason to believe that the Puritan Government

<sup>1</sup> *Memorials of Temple Bar*: T. C. Noble.



looked with disfavour upon coffee. On the contrary rather, it would seem to have regarded the beverage as 'a wakeful and civil drink,' tending rather to encourage sobriety. Indeed, a versifier of 1665 noted that

'Coffee and Commonwealth begin  
Both with one letter, both came in  
Together for a Reformation  
To make a free and sober nation.'<sup>1</sup>

As events turned out Farr was allowed to continue at the 'Rainbow' on promising to abate the nuisance of his smoking chimney, and the complainants had to put up with the 'evil smells' as best they might.

Competitors of Bowman and Farr seem to have made their appearance but slowly. In the *Advertiser* of May 19 and 26, 1657, there is an advertisement to the effect that 'in Bartholemew Lane, on the back side of the Old Exchange the drink called coffee is to be sold in the morning, and at three of the clock in the afternoon.' This was probably the 'Globe.' There was also a 'Turke's Head' in Lothbury as early as 1659, for a coffee-house token bearing that date has come down to us and is preserved in the Guildhall Museum, London. There were doubtless others—Pepys mentions visiting coffee-houses during one of those periods when he had made a resolution against 'drinking of wine and going to plays'—but it was after the Great Fire of 1666 that the coffee-house movement received its big impetus. That these resorts were, on the whole, more decorous than the taverns and alehouses of the time is evident from a picture of 'the oulde Coffee-house formerly Bowman's' given by an eye-witness<sup>2</sup> during the time of the Plague. As was observed during the Great War, even times of national crisis fail to kill the regular habits of the Londoner. They may reconcile him to doing without the usual lumps of sugar in his tea, or submit to a reduction of the hours during which he may obtain intoxicating liquor, but, so far as possible, he will follow the beaten routine of his life. So, when the Plague was at its height, folks still adhered to their accustomed habit of forgathering at the coffee-house. They were careful not to mix with strangers, though, who might but just have come from a plague-stricken house. In cases of doubt the customers would keep apart from one another until such fear of infection were allayed, and then they would join in company.

<sup>1</sup> *Character of a Coffee-house*. By an Eye and Ear Witness.

<sup>2</sup> *Description and History of the Coffee Tree*: Douglas.

A different picture is given by Defoe of a scene in a tavern where blaspheming and drunken roysterers 'in the middle of all this Horror met every night, and behaved with all the revolting and roaring extravagances . . . to an offensive degree.'

When, after the Fire, the ruins of the City were cleared and once more built upon, coffee-houses sprang up all over the place, and some were destined to achieve a fame which lasted long beyond the century which saw their birth. For instance, there was Garway's or Garraway's, in Exchange Alley, which was the first to be opened after the Fire, and is often stated to be the first house where China tea was first sold in England. An original bill of Garraway's is in existence which runs thus :

'Tea in England hath been sold in the leaf for Six pounds and sometimes for Ten pounds the 1 lb. weight, and in respect of its former scarceness and dearness it hath only been used as a regalia in high treatments and entertainments, and presents made thereof to Princes and Grandees till the year 1657. The said Thomas Garway did purchase a quantity thereof and first publicly sold the said tea in leaf and drink, etc.'

This bill bears no date, but as it was issued from Exchange Alley it is fair to assume that it was not earlier than 1666 or 1667, as there is no record of Garraway having a coffee-house before that date. In Rugge's *Diurnal* in September, 1658, there are advertisements that this China Drink was obtainable at the Sultaness Coffee-house in Sweeting's Rents, Cornhill, and elsewhere, and Pepys notes in his *Diary* in 1660, 'I did send for a cup of tea, a Chinese drink which I had never drank before,' but nowhere is any mention of Garraway's. What possibly Garraway meant to claim was not that he was the first to sell tea, but the first to sell it in both the leaf and liquid forms.

Besides Garraway's there were also in Exchange Alley Jonathan's and Baker's, both of which, a chronicler of the period states, were chiefly frequented by 'Brokers, Stockjobbers, Frenchmen, Jews, as well as other Merchants and Gentlemen.' Baker's survived—in the form of a chop-house—until a few years ago, and the site is marked by a tablet erected by the City authorities. John's, too, first in Birchin Lane, and afterwards next to the Royal Exchange, in Cornhill, was a celebrated house in those days. But another twenty years was to elapse before the most famous of all was to make its appearance.

Meanwhile, the growing popularity of these places was causing

the keepers of the taverns and wine shops no little concern, as they saw the possibility of their profits being seriously affected. Versifiers, lampooners and pamphleteers were pressed into their service to inveigh against the new trade, and hold up to obloquy its patrons. Language was used by these writers as extravagant in denunciation as had been employed by the vendors in extolling the virtues of coffee. As witness the rhymester who proclaimed that :

‘ They give ye for the vine’s pure blood  
A loathsome potion not yet understood :  
Syrup of soot and Essence of old shoes  
Dash’t with diurnals and the Books of News.’

Or the pamphleteer who, in describing a coffee-house, averred that ‘ The Room stinks of Tobacco worse than Hell of Brimstone, and is as full of smoak as their heads that frequent it, whose humours are as various as those of Bedlam, and their discourse of times as heathenish and dull as their liquor.’

The same writer sneered that ‘ he who comes often saves 2*d.* a week in *Gazets*, and has his news and his coffee for the same charge.’ Still another declared that ‘ Very many of them are . . . become scandalous for a man to be seen in them ; which gentlemen, not knowing, do frequently fall into them by chance, and so their reputation is drawn into question thereby.’

There is no doubt that they were favourite rendezvous for the transaction of business, the hearing and spreading of the latest news, and consequent gossip thereon. Opponents of these places averred that such gossip was not always of a harmless character, and rumours eventually reached the authorities that many people resorted to these places for a much more sinister purpose than merely pleasing their palates. The tavern-keepers did their best to spread these reports—if they did not themselves originate them. The Restoration of the monarchy in England had been accomplished, but supporters of the Cromwellian regime were not all extinct, and spies and tale-bearers were plentiful enough. Charles wavered between reluctance to curtail the freedom of his subjects, and fear of sedition. Eventually, however, in 1672, he ordered the Lord Keeper and the judges who were in town to attend upon him, and advise as to what steps, if any, should be taken. The considered opinion of these learned men was that :

‘ Retailing coffee might be an innocent Trade, as it might be exercised ; but as it is used at present, in the Nature of a common

assembly, to discourse of Matters of State, News and *great Persons*, as they are Nurseries of Idleness and Pragmaticalness, and hinder the Expence of our native Provisions they might be thought common nuisances.'

This very indefinite pronouncement was hardly strong enough to encourage drastic action, and it was as well, perhaps, to remember that there was a tax of 8*d.* a gallon on coffee. For the present, therefore, the question was shelved. Whether, in the course of the next few years the coffee-house politicians grew more reckless in the expression of their views, or Charles in the meantime had sought other advisers, matters came to a head in December, 1675, by the issue of a Royal Proclamation from Whitehall suppressing the coffee-houses and revoking all licences to sell by retail 'Coffee, Chocolat, Sherbett or Tea' as from the 10th January following. The reason given was that 'divers false, malicious and scandalous reports are devised and spread abroad to the Defamation of his Majestie's Government, and to the Disturbance of the Peace and Quiet of the Realm.'

This was a veritable bombshell, and a general outcry was raised. Persons of quality, business men, and indeed all sorts and conditions missed their accustomed haunts, and Sir Roger North has recorded that he believed 'a convulsion and discontent would unavoidably follow.' Charles took fright at the commotion he had caused, as he wished above all things to avoid arousing such a revulsion of popular feeling as would compel him 'to set out on his travels again.' On the 8th January—two days before the original Proclamation was to have come into effect—a second one was issued announcing that 'out of his Majestie's princely consideration and out of his royal compassion' the masters of these establishments would be permitted to keep them open on condition that they should 'prevent all scandalous papers, books and libels from being read in them, and hinder every person from declaring, uttering or divulging all manner of false and scandalous reports against the Government or the Ministers thereof.'

From this time onward coffee-houses were free from Government interference so long as their owners kept to the conditions of the above Proclamation, and they came to be utilised more and more as meeting-places for the transaction of business, so far as the City ones were concerned, at any rate. In 1688, or thereabouts, a coffee-house was opened in Tower Street, by Thames side, which developed in after years into an institution destined to become

world-famous. The proprietor of this establishment was a man named Edward Lloyd, and his customers were, for the most part, seafaring men and persons interested in the shipping trade. Four years later Lloyd removed to premises at the corner of Abchurch Lane and Lombard Street, nearer to the centre of the commercial life of the City. There shipowners could more conveniently meet the captains of their vessels, and shippers could meet underwriters, and all the business of charter-parties, bills of lading, and insurance be transacted. Auction sales 'by inch of candle' were also a feature of the place. The method of auction was to thrust a pin into a lighted candle about an inch from the top, and the last bidder before the pin dropped into the candlestick was declared the purchaser.

Lloyd had, in very short time, organised quite an extensive connection of home and foreign correspondents in the principal ports of the time from whom he received constant news of the movements of vessels, and other matters of interest to his clients. These news items he had been in the habit of posting up in his establishment for all to read, but in 1696 he started the publication of a news sheet called *Lloyd's News*, which appeared three times a week. It consisted of a leaf of two pages, each containing  $10\frac{1}{2}$  by  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches of letterpress, and added considerably to the popularity of the house. The Bodleian Library contains a file of all but the first seven numbers. This journalistic enterprise was not fated to have an unchequered career, for it had hardly been running seven months before it came into conflict with the authorities in consequence of the publication of some information regarding a debate in the House of Lords. The item itself was harmless enough, but Lloyd was summoned to appear before the bar of the House, and was there informed that the report was 'groundless and a mistake.' He was called upon to 'rectify it in his next,' but the matter was settled by Lloyd undertaking that he 'would print no more at present.' He kept his word: handwriting was substituted for printing, and the paper continued to appear in that form for nearly thirty years.

In 1726 the name of the journal was altered to *Lloyd's List*, under which title it exists to-day. It can, therefore, claim to be the oldest newspaper in existence, with the single exception of the *London Gazette*, while the Corporation which is responsible for its issue occupies the proud position of being the mightiest insurance organisation the world has ever seen.

That the combination of auction-room and news-room was a special feature of Edward Lloyd's establishment is evident from a

'poem' entitled 'The Wealthy Shopkeeper,' published in 1700, wherein we read that :

'Now to Lloyd's coffee-house he never fails  
To read the letters, and attend the sales.'

The articles there put up for sale covered a wide range of goods, but it is interesting to note, in passing, that until comparatively recent times sales of ships by auction were held periodically in the Captains' Room at Lloyd's.

While the coffee-houses in the City were becoming more and more an important adjunct to the business life of the community, there were houses more to the west which were making for themselves a reputation in other directions. For example, at the 'Globe,' in Fleet Street, one was more likely to hear politics discussed than business. Will's in Covent Garden was the favourite resort of the wits and poets of the period, and numbered among its regular patrons Congreve and Dryden. The latter, indeed, seems to have been the unchallenged 'king' of the coterie which assembled there. He had his own armchair—his by prescriptive right which none dared to dispute—in its settled place by the fire in winter, and on the balcony in summer. At Will's the discussions dealt more with the latest ode or satire than with the political doings of the day, and any dispute as to the merits or authorship of any particular piece of literature would inevitably be referred to the dictum of the great John Dryden, and anyone who secured the privilege of a conversation with him, and the accompanying honour of a pinch from his snuff-box, thereafter felt entitled to consider himself as one of the 'wits.'

Farther west still, in the neighbourhood of St. James's, were to be found houses where the beaux and men of fashion forgathered, and where the topics of conversation were more likely to deal with the most recent scandal or the latest mode. But these haunts became just as much a part of their frequenters' daily life as Will's was of the wits, the Grecian of the lawyers and the members of the Royal Society, or Lloyd's of the merchants, underwriters, and the shipping fraternity generally.

That the coffee-house filled a public need there is not the slightest doubt. It afforded a very convenient meeting-place for men engaged in a common pursuit, and it was more economical than the tavern. Moreover, it provided a place to which one could resort frequently without acquiring the reputation of being a toper. The

posting up of news-letters in these establishments was undoubtedly a great attraction. The thirst for news was as keen in those days as it is to-day. 'No man these days,' exclaimed Chief Justice Scroggs on one occasion, 'can keep a penny in his pocket because of the news,' and that the coffee-houses were the recognised publicity centres is evidenced by a remark of Judge Jeffreys when trying Compton, Bishop of London, before the Court of High Commission. The accused prelate complained that he had no copy of the indictment, to which Jeffreys retorted that 'all the coffee-houses had it for a penny.'

The transition from the coffee-house to the club was a natural evolution. The frequenters of the former were subjected to no rules or regulations beyond those of the canons of decent behaviour. Its doors were open to all who chose to lay down the modest fee of a penny at the bar. Addison has expressed the opinion that 'all celebrated clubs were founded upon eating and drinking, because they are points where most men agree, and in which the learned and the illiterate, the dull and the cunning, the philosopher and the buffoon, can all of them bear a part.' This may be true to a certain extent, but the time comes when the cultured man tires of the company of the ignorant, the philosopher of the fool, and 'the birds of a feather flock together,' whether it be to dine or to debate, to gamble or to gossip.

Thus it came about that as each coffee-house became more and more distinctive and representative of one particular set, its customers became more and more desirous of obtaining seclusion, and protecting themselves against the chance incursion of any unwelcome stranger whose penny had secured him admission. Gradually the whole procedure of proposing, seconding and electing by duly appointed committees was evolved, exclusiveness was secured, and the club, as we know it to-day, came into being.

Club, auction-mart, newspaper, debating society, and the greatest insurance organisation in the world—all claim kinship with the coffee-house, and two of them, at least, direct descent.

## THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE.

BY THE HON. A. J. MCGREGOR.

'THE palm without the dust' (*sine pulvere palmæ*) is a phrase given us by Horace—Andrew Lang's 'wise and kindly heathen; of mortals the most human.' Elsewhere Horace makes mention of 'those whom the palm of Elis sends to their home very denizens of heaven, boxer or charioteer.' (Wickham's trans. In modern phraseology we might speak of 'blue' or 'cap,' cup or trophy.) But the Latin poet uses a further phrase, *limæ labor*—the labour of the file: and his phrases hint, not obscurely, at two distinctive attitudes to life—that of the successful diletante, and that of the strenuous worker. The first is sometimes the spoilt child of fortune; the worker with the file—artist, craftsman, student, scientist—must often be content 'to scorn delights and live laborious days'; though to be sure the labour may well have its cheerful or satisfying patches, besides earning a more material reward.

There is no need to hark back for illustration to Alcibiades or Archimedes, or to moralise from butterfly or busy bee; we ourselves, did we but look around or within, or remember what 'our fathers have told us,' can recall illustrative instances; nor is it safe to dismiss, as childish or idle, the old and instructive account of the race between hare and tortoise. It throws light on the two attitudes towards life, to which we have already referred. Unfortunately for the moral to be drawn, one inclines to think of the tortoise as a dull or commonplace creature whose taciturnity does not connote the silence that is golden. In Shakespeare's *Tempest* we find Prospero saying to Caliban (of all people), 'Come, then, tortoise!' And yet in common fairness we must credit him with persistency; and vaguely—for what it is worth—we remember how he gave a fancy name to the lyre in the ancient world and how his shell suggested or symbolised a military formation (*testudo*) to the Roman soldier. However that may be, in the historic race the lumbering and sedulous tortoise reached the goal before the sprightly and hedonistic hare.

Lord Dalmeny—the Rosebery of later days and Empire fame—was apparently no tortoise. At Eton his tutor, Mr. Johnson



(presently to be known as Cory, and to be remembered for his haunting version of Callimachus's epitaph on Heraclitus) writes to Mr. Cornish about young Dalmeny: 'I would give you a piece of plate if you could get that lad to work; he is one of those who like the palm without the dust.' Dr. Dryasdust, receiving such a communication, might look his most solemn self and slowly excogitate some weighty comment appropriate to the grave theme. We of to-day, wise after the event, need feel no regret that Johnson wrote as he did, or that the subject of his solicitous interest continued to follow a way wherein he could avoid the dust. True enough, Lord Rosebery left Oxford without a degree; but even so he subsequently gave us an attractive and engaging life of Pitt (not to mention books on Chatham and Napoleon), and—as people still remember—he realised the three objects of his ambition: to marry a rich heiress, to win the Derby, to become Prime Minister. As might have been anticipated, he found that office no bed of roses, with Harcourt leading in the Commons and Labouchere dispensing *Truth*. (*En passant*, the pertinent question arises, whether something of the tortoise quality might not have helped to give drive and direction to Rosebery's leadership?) Admittedly the Orator of Empire had his limitations; but would he, without those limitations (being such as they were), have been the Rosebery people knew and acclaimed—master of happy phrase; keen observer of the social and political scene; whimsical, impressive and accomplished actor on the Parliamentary stage? One takes leave to doubt it.

Or, again, if Disraeli, after diligent study on orthodox lines, had won first a scholarship and then a fellowship at Balliol, should we have had *Coningsby*, or would its author have become the favourite Prime Minister of his 'Faery' Sovereign? If Cecil Rhodes, burning the midnight oil, had learned to read Plato and Thucydides with ease in their native Greek, would the Cape have got its Hinterland, when it did, and Rhodes scholars their cherished years at Oxford? Had President Kruger supplemented an academical course at Stellenbosch (not yet a university) by reading for a doctorate at Utrecht, would he in the ordinary course have become the 'Oom Paul' of tradition, the individualistic President of the Transvaal? And one might raise similar queries about Lincoln and (possibly) Shakespeare. Such questions are more easily put than answered; nor could one with confidence rule out an answer in the negative, throughout.

To some it might appear as though *fortuna* were a bit biassed in favour of the hit-or-miss, chance-and-hazard, practitioners in life; and, indeed, the onlooker is, almost unwittingly, disposed to watch with interest, if not actually to regard with favour, this improvised way of doing things, this cheery confidence in the inspiration of the moment. In short, the mercurial nimbleness of the hare takes our fancy where the almost mechanical persistence of the tortoise 'leaves us cold.' But dangers may be lurking about the way followed by the hare. The gamble sounds exciting; the impromptu is greeted with a smile: but the dashing hit may presently be followed by a devastating miss. Chance is a capricious jade (there may be a forgotten Goschen, a hitherto underrated W. H. Smith); and in the long run, as a general rule, the reward for solid and abiding work goes to him who has laboured with the file—sometimes, indeed, to Mr. Slow and Steady. Unconsciously perhaps—and, it may be, mistakenly at times—the rule of 'safety first' comes into play. One does not dispute the proposition that certain things can be done only, or done most effectively, by a man of genius; and Dr. Glover in his admirable *Ancient World* has reminded us that 'perhaps when all is said, we have to confess that we do not know what genius is.' We do, however, know that not every man can bend the bow of Ulysses; and there may be times when we shrewdly suspect that someone labours under the delusion that he is equal to the effort, until experience demonstrates the contrary; and even then he, personally, may remain 'a man convinced against his will.'

It need not therefore be matter of surprise if people nowadays incline, in the main, to favour a scheduled course of study, with no special programme or exemptions for the brilliant youth—conceiving that by such a system they secure the best results on the whole and give the ordinary lad o' pairts his opportunity—assuming the while that young genius can be left to look after himself, which probably is often the case. People in short act on the assumption that there is virtue in the 'dust' principle (it need not be dry-as-dust). That principle may in practice induce discipline of the mind, and even—within limits—of the imagination, And discipline (if not too Draconic) should avail to steady the unquiet mind, to dispel 'impervious vapours,' to give strength of muscle, and even stability of mind.

The younger Pitt is a case in point. Besides being brought up by 'the consummate Chatham,' he knew the labour of the file.

'It was noticed how minutely he applied himself to the study of language. . . . In mathematics and in Locke's philosophy he found an admirable discipline for his reasoning powers. . . . He was a hard student'; and Lecky adds that 'there was nothing in his studies that was desultory or aimless.' Here in sooth the palm was won with dust, the lure of the hare was not allowed to obscure the teaching of the tortoise; and Dr. Dryasdust is entitled to stress the fact that Pitt became Prime Minister in his twenty-fifth year. (Judged by this standard, Lord Rosebery was almost middle-aged when he took over the Foreign Office.)

After all, as so often in life, we have to refrain from seeking to lay down a general rule to meet all cases. The young hopeful who, reflecting on the career of men like Rosebery and Rhodes, essays to avoid the dust and to be a law unto himself intellectually, may be missing what in his case is essential for achievement and good work—may lose the palm, and have little else to show on the credit side of his life's balance sheet. He may presently discover that his most cherished efforts (for all their brightness, colour and noise) are no more lasting or effective than the onslaught made by the Atlantic wave on the coast of Connemara. (I, personally, am indebted for this simile, in substance, to a speech, as I recollect it, made in the House of Commons in 1895 by Mr. Tim Healy.)<sup>1</sup> Conversely, he who devotes himself too rigorously and too exclusively to the study of learned tomes may become an erudite scholar (no mean achievement, no small reward, I grant you!) but may miss the prize to be won in the political arena or the gymnasium of public activity or the gracious field of social service. Let a man then be fully persuaded in his own mind how he shall seek to shape his course, and not simply go by the spin of a coin—even though this saves trouble.

And what meanwhile about our Lady of the Imagination? She does not cry at the gates, or display her wares on the front stall of the market-place; but be sure she has gifts in her wallet for such as have the wit to wait upon her and the faith to follow her. For she can conduct them to 'the green pleasancess and blissful seats of the Fortunate Woodlands,' where 'an ampler air clothes the meadows in lustrous sheen' (Mackail's trans.). There men can rest awhile and get refreshment when wearied with the *sturm und drang* of life. But even there, 'if this be your heart's desire, scale this ridge': imagination must not be confounded with

<sup>1</sup> I do not vouch for Connemara. Clare or Galway would do equally well.

sloth ; perchance she would have us learn alike from the nimble hare and the assiduous tortoise. And, for all we know, she may be warning us not to become unduly specialised, not to be arthritically standardised, in mind and spirit, in an age where standardising plays so big a part ; to avoid what John Buchan somewhere called 'the confusion of the mass-mind.' For our edification, possibly, was told (or invented) the tale of a certain epitaph, 'Born a man, died a grocer.'

*Pretoria.*

### MORITURUS.

Body and Soul  
Through my long life  
Have lived together  
As man and wife,

Sometimes at peace,  
Sometimes at odds,  
As it is written  
Of men and Gods.

Both had faults,  
But they grew wise  
And found some pleasure  
In compromise.

For better or worse  
The twain were wed :—  
Which ? Ah that  
Remains to be said,

Now that for better  
Again or worse  
Duly follows  
The long divorce.

WILLOUGHBY WEAVING.

*Co. Armagh.*

### THE RUNNING BROOKS.

*Arthur James Balfour, First Earl of Balfour: Volume I:* Blanche E. C. Balfour (Hutchinson, 18s. n.).

*Anne Douglas Sedgwick: A Portrait in Letters:* Chosen and Edited by Basil de Selincourt (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.).

*Portugal: A Book of Folk-Ways:* Rodney Gallop (Cambridge University Press, 15s. n.).

*Leaves from the Jungle:* Verrier Elwin (Murray, 9s. n.).

*Three Deserts:* Major C. S. Jarvis (Murray, 10s. 6d. n.).

*Far Forest:* Francis Brett Young (Hennemann, 8s. 6d. n.).

*Vagabond Minstrel:* Thomas Burke (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.).

*Again, One Day:* Matila Ghyka (Methuen, 7s. 6d. n.).

*Bury Him Darkly:* Henry Wade (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.).

MRS. BLANCHE E. C. DUGDALE, niece of *Arthur James Balfour, First Earl of Balfour*, and her uncle's chosen biographer, has carried out a task of great magnitude with much skill, discretion, and sympathy. Her biography, designed as a full-length study of which the present volume is the first, is planned on a generous scale and does, as her publishers claim for it, 'do much to illuminate an enigmatic personality.' Its period, opening with Lord Balfour's birth in 1848, covers his Eton and Cambridge days, his entry into politics, and the long succession of offices held by him up to the last two years of Conservative Government in 1905. The book is based upon a wide knowledge of the political and historical backgrounds of the time and contains, in addition to its author's own illuminating comments and records, a large number of hitherto unpublished letters and documents. It is in many of these and in Mrs. Dugdale's notes of intimate conversations that the personality of Lord Balfour is most clearly and strikingly interpreted, the man as well as the politician, the philosopher as well as the statesman. The volume is an important contribution to biography and to political history, a book of stimulating, provocative, and stirring memory whose readers, interested and held by the sweep of its panorama, will look forward to its promised successor.

Mr. Basil de Selincourt has followed an unusual course in his choice and editing of the letters of *Anne Douglas Sedgwick* in presenting them without biographical introduction or editorial comment. The result is an impression of a fine and sensitive intelligence as well as of a gay and infinitely courageous spirit. The

letters record, too, the steady development of a personality, and the maturing of creative and critical power. Reading them, it is as if one were admitted to a privileged circle, often charmed, and always warmed and lit by the humour, insight, and tenderness of their writer. For they are the intimate outpourings of a very human mind and heart in their contacts with beauty, with sorrow and with happiness—a gracious portrait of one who obviously gave of her best to her friends as to her books.

The aim of Mr. Rodney Gallop's *Portugal: A Book of Folk-Ways* is to make the first general review of the Portuguese folk-heritage so far attempted in any language. It is divided into two parts, the first designed 'to set the stage for the folk-activities with which the remainder is concerned'—Traditional Beliefs and Customs, Folk-Music and Literature. In such a book research and erudition must necessarily play large parts. But so great is Mr. Gallop's skill in presenting in eminently readable form the vast amount of material he has collected from innumerable sources and first-hand investigation that the reader is quickly captured by the interest of his subject and the charm of his picturesque, lively descriptions. Moreover, the fact that in order to make his thesis 'immediately intelligible to the uninitiated' he has 'gone over a great deal of the ground already familiar to the folklorist' adds much to the value of the book from the layman's point of view. Not the least of the charms of a fascinating volume are its photographs and the clever thumb-nail sketches by Marjorie Gallop.

Many records of missionary endeavour and heroism have been given to the world, but it is rare to come across one written with such penetrating humour, candour, and sincerity as Mr. Verrier Elwin's *Leaves from the Jungle*, in which he tells, in diary form, the tale of his three-years' work among the Gonds, the primitive inhabitants of the region in which Rudyard Kipling staged some of his 'Jungle Book' stories. It is a brave and splendid tale of militant Christianity leagued with Hindus and Mussulmans in a spirit of Franciscan poverty to bring some elements of hygiene and education into the lives of an aboriginal and suffering people—a tale told with simplicity and complete lack of self-aggrandisement, inspiring in its sane humanity, very entertaining in its wit and shrewdness of observation. There is hardly a page but contains something worth quoting, a sentence one would fain remember, an impression of character or circumstance instinct with truth or beatified by humour. Mr. Elwin is too modest in his hope that

if he and his helpers are 'not worthy to ask the prayers of St. Francis,' they 'may at least invoke the aid of Mr. Pickwick.'

The name of Major C. S. Jarvis is already familiar to readers of CORNHILL. His latest book, *Three Deserts*, is a record of his service with the Egyptian Frontiers Administration—which he joined at its inception in 1918—and of his recently concluded term of office as Governor of Sinai—a service that, in addition to its administrative duties, has compelled Major Jarvis to become 'a builder of houses, bridges, and dams; an agriculturist, stock-breeder, and apiarist; a Customs official and Inspector of Education; a police officer and a judge.' As he himself puts it, 'it is this extraordinary variety which has made the job so fascinating,' a fascination he has succeeded in transferring to his book, its vigorous pages packed with lively anecdote, trenchant criticism, and vivid personal experience. There are also two specially appealing chapters, one on the gardens the author has made about his four different desert homes, the other on the dog companions who shared them.

It is, I think, the settings rather than the characters which make the enchantment of Mr. Francis Brett Young's *Far Forest*. Again and again during the book's long and leisurely course one comes back, either in memory or as the scene shifts, to the forest and the floods, the hop-fields and the farms of Worcestershire with a sense almost of homecoming. And the end when Jenny, reunited to her long-lost David after the terrible experiences which have made her mother and widow, comes back at last to Nineveh with its fireless hearth and run-down clock is an emotional relief even if there is something of romantic licence in the manner of her coming. Yet even here, so strong is the compulsion of Mr. Young's art, the coincidence of the meeting between Jenny and David seems inevitable. Hard circumstance, terror and disillusion have had their way with them. But the spell of the forest is still about them as it is about the reader. Idyll and tragedy—Mr. Young sounds the note of both with practised skill.

The hero of Mr. Thomas Burke's biographical novel, *Vagabond Minstrel*, is the unfortunate Irish poet, Thomas Dermody, whose brief career—he died at the age of twenty-eight—the author traces with a vivid pen. Dermody, an infant prodigy, lisping Latin almost in his cradle, scribbling poetry before he was in his 'teens, set out to conquer Dublin and London, and failed, not for want of a helping hand, but because his spirit could brook no restraint, and the under-world into which he drifted offered greater freedom

than the conventions of society. That he was his own worst enemy makes his *dégringolade* none the less pitiful, and Mr. Burke, than whom no writer has revealed the seamy side of life with greater sympathy, handles his character with infinite pity. One must take his word for Dermody's charm, for the boy was a wild young dog who snarled at the charity he demanded and whose vanity was greater than his pride. The book is a lively pastiche of its period—the turn of the eighteenth century—its story decorated with Irish and English character-studies, and everywhere the author's admirable prose lends vigour to its varied backgrounds.

*Again, One Day*, translated from the French of M. Matila C. Ghyka by Miss Maud Bigge, has something of a cinematic quality in its swift, impressionistic pictures of post-war Vienna, Prague, and other Central European settings. The author, a Rumanian diplomat, has obviously an extensive knowledge of European cities and affairs with which he has embellished a rather fantastic tale of the missing heir to a principedom, his romantic attachment to a princess disguised as a secretary, and the reinstatement in a diplomatic capacity of an ex-naval attaché at the Court of St. James's. It is this elusive figure of pathos and dignity which is the main pivot of a book whose intricacies were probably easier to follow in its original version, but whose interest for readers with a knowledge of cosmopolitan backgrounds and culture should be considerable.

Mr. Henry Wade's *Bury Him Darkly* is an eminently satisfactory 'thriller' which takes the reader into the confidence of Scotland Yard from the outset and allows him to follow, step by step, the unravelling of a double murder-mystery without the interference of any amateur 'sleuthing' other than his own mental queries and deductions. The night-watchman at a Bond Street jeweller's is found dead and the show-cases empty. Chief-Inspector Burr, with young Inspector Poole, who has already figured in more than one of Mr. Wade's books, takes up the case. A second murder follows. But it would be unfair to reveal the identity of the victim. The story has some grisly moments, admirably handled, and its interest as 'a piece of pure detection' is absorbing. The reader is never misled; all the clues are perfectly logical, and the whole process of elucidation set forth with such meticulous care as to make one feel that if the detective of fact is as patient and painstaking as the detective of fiction he is indeed worthy of admiration and respect.

M. E. N.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

## DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 156.

THE EDITOR of the CORNHILL offers two prizes of books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue, to the two solvers of the Literary Acrostic whose letters are opened first. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must contain the Coupon from page v of the preliminary pages of this issue. They must reach the Editor by the 29th October.

'As this pale taper's earthly spark,  
To ——— round;  
So shows my soul before the Lamb,  
My spirit before Thee;'

1. 'The cloud capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
———, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,'
2. 'And as I sat, ——— the light blue hills  
There came a noise of revellers:'
3. 'If of herself she will not love,  
——— can make her:  
The devil take her!'
4. 'Or bid me ———, and I will dare  
E'en death to die for thee.'
5. '——— such is Time, that takes in trust  
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,  
And pays us but with earth and dust;'
6. 'From the ——— islands,  
Where loud waves are dumb,  
Listening to my sweet pipings.'

Answer to Acrostic 154, August number. 'As soothed the dazzled eye with *SOBER SHEEN*' (Shelley: 'The Question'). 1. 'ShoreS' (Keats: 'Song of the Indian Maiden'). 2. 'OH' (Coleridge: 'Ancient Mariner'). 3. *BelievE* (Robert Browning: 'In a Gondola'). 4. 'EasE' (Elizabeth Browning: 'Sonnet from the Portuguese'). 5. 'ReturN' (Sydney Dobell: 'Return').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss Scattergood, The White Cottage, Rusthall, and Miss Sexty, 14 Park Hill Rise, Croydon. These two solvers are invited to choose books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue.

THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER 1936.

*WITH THE GUN IN EGYPT.*

BY C. S. JARVIS.

*I. THE NILE VALLEY.*

ALTHOUGH Egypt as a big-game country has little or nothing to offer the sportsman beyond a few intensely shy ibex in Sinai and the Red Sea mountains, and still fewer and shyer wild sheep on the plateaux east of Assiut, it is by no means to be despised so far as the scatter-gun is concerned. The indigenous birds of the Nile Valley and surrounding deserts, namely the chikor or Hayes partridge and several varieties of the sand grouse, are not plentiful and, moreover, are also extremely local; but Egypt lies on the main route of the big annual migration of duck and snipe, so that during the winter months every stretch of marsh and inundation is a feeding area for the huge flights that pass southwards in the late autumn and northwards in the early spring.

Unfortunately, of recent years the duck and snipe shooting of the Delta has become too thoroughly commercialised altogether, and every conceivable holding ground for birds is let to syndicates. so that wild-fowling now, from being a pleasant pastime, has turned into a form of organised mass assassination with averages to maintain. That is to say, the toll of birds picked up to a single gun is one of the chief topics in the Clubs during the winter, and the average of duck or snipe to cartridges expended is another—if slightly more mendacious—record that is eagerly sought after. Quite indifferent shots frequently head the average list in this department and it is always a matter for conjecture whether this is due to an unusual and unaccountable display of skill or merely to inefficient mental arithmetic. No stigma, however, is attached to an incorrect statement of the number of cartridges carried to a shoot, as bad memories are a recognised failing in Egypt and are attributed, like most other things, to the climate—anyone with a really good memory is regarded as ‘not quite.’

With shooting conducted on these lines it is a very moot point how long the supply of migrating duck will last, as indiscriminate slaughter of this description cannot go on for ever. In the past a

few of the best *birkas* (pools) in the vicinity of Cairo were rented by the Army in Egypt and officials, but of recent years the foreign and Egyptian population have taken up 'le sport' and taken it up all too keenly. There is no longer any question of shooting a few birds for the pot, and Fridays and Sundays during the winter are now devoted to systematic extermination of everything that flies.

A day on a duck-shoot when the competitive spirit is absent is, however, very good fun and very little harm is done provided one takes only the certain shots, thus eliminating as far as possible the wounding of scores of birds that die miserably the following day, and knocks off immediately one has obtained sufficient edible duck for the requirement of one's household pot and a few inedible ones for those of one's acquaintances who do not know the difference between a mallard and a ferruginous. The ferruginous may taste like a six-day-old hake, but he has very glorious feathering, and after all very few people have any palate after ten years in the East. If one does this one has the consolation of knowing that one has played the game, even if nobody else on the odd three hundred *birkas* has done likewise. Virtue is its own reward and one can adopt a lofty attitude at the Club that evening, which everyone will attribute to either temporary mental trouble, drink, or a thoroughly off day which one lacks the moral courage to admit.

One drives out through the cultivation in the early hours of a crisp morning in December, and during the short run to the shoot passes on the hard earth track by the canal bank the backbone of Egypt—the toil-worn, hardy fellah who puts in a 98-hour week at five shillings and threepence, blissfully unconscious of the fact that in more enlightened Great Britain a man can draw a thirty-shilling dole for doing nothing but suck his teeth, lean against a corner, and fill in football coupons. One meets all of Egypt that really matters as one travels through the Delta with its chessboard of maize, wheat, and barley squares, its odd clumps of date palm, and here and there by the *sagga* (water-wheels) a few branching sunt or acacia trees. The fellah women in their rusty black garments carrying baskets of manure on their heads; a group of blue-cotton-clad labourers going to their work with their mattocks over their shoulders; innumerable donkeys from the poor man's moke to the breedy white ambler whose type has not changed since the days of the Pharaohs; and, last but not least, the bean-fed *hamla* (baggage) camel of the cultivation—a heavy, stocky beast carrying a load of maize stalks the size of a

haystack. It is this plebeian animal for which the aristocratic and snobbish Bedouin, with his light-weight riding camel, has such a supreme contempt. He looks at it with the same pitying smile as you may detect on the face of a very well-mounted member of a Shire hunt when he sees at the Meet the local solicitor on Farmer Barlett's stocky cob that yesterday was drawing the pigs to market. 'That's not a camel,' he will say; 'that's only an old bean-eating pig.'

The shoot is usually a stretch of pools on the edge of the desert that have been formed by the rise of the Nile. Some of the deeper ones are permanent, but the greater part of them are quite temporary—far too temporary in some cases, as syndicates have been known to pay a high price for a nicely inundated stretch that before the migration starts has returned to its normal state of sandy desert sprouting with cattle-feed lupin.

At the shoot one is met by the *ghaffir*—a word which is derived from the Arabic word '*aghfor*,' to watch. The peculiarity about the *ghaffir* tribe is that the one thing they abstain from is watching and looking out except on those occasions when for suitable baksheesh they allow another party on one's own particular stretch of water. On these occasions the most myopic and astigmatic of them can detect the glint of sun on an approaching car at a distance of three miles. The *ghaffir* is attended by the gun boys who play the part of water spaniels when one is shooting, and invariably start walking about in the open when the one and only flight of white-fronted geese are approaching the butt. They are not a particularly intelligent class but generously credit duck and other wild-fowl with sufficient grey matter to be able to realise that there is nothing to be feared from a man who is not carrying a gun. These *ghaffirs*, who manage the shoots of the *Khawagat* (Europeans), are recruited from the type that would be called 'Corner Boys' in the Free State of Ireland. That is to say they have just sufficient brain to understand that a far easier and more remunerative form of livelihood can be achieved by discarding the mattock entirely and making the best use of the few words of English that they possess. This very small vocabulary, combined with a little cunning and a perfectly natural gift for flattery, ensures sufficient backsheesh on Fridays and Sundays to allow of five days' complete rest during the remainder of the week. The flattery usually takes the form of 'Good shot, Mr. Major. You shootit better than Captain Hopus Johnsten, the officer gentleman

shooten here last wik.' As the gentleman of this name is easily the best shot in Egypt one naturally decides that the tip for that morning must be 20 piastres instead of 10.

At nine o'clock, which is normally zero hour during the duck season in the Nile Valley, one hears a splutter of shots extending from Ayyat in the south to Pattah to the north. To be exact, one cannot quite hear all this distance, but the fact remains that on Sundays and most Fridays there are guns on every duck-holding stretch of water from Minieh to Alexandria, with a branch line extending from Tel el Kebir north to Damietta and north-east through Ismailia to Port Said. Immediately long strings of duck appear against the pale lemon of the morning sky and at the same moment the magnificent pack of pintail that have been feeding in the most confiding manner in front of one's own particular hide—and which one has been waiting for—get up and fly straight into the Italian syndicate to the north, where they are greeted by salvos from long-range weapons. This was a particularly galling state of affairs last winter when we realised that every form of sanctions had failed dismally—the Italians continuing to bombard us with macaroni backed up by its vermicelli and spaghetti satellites, and making the table noisome with their Gorgonzola cheese what time every other Nation kept them fully supplied with oil, camels, lorries, and water, and even fighting duck.

In the vicinity of one's hide the gun boys have set up a dozen or so wooden decoys with removable heads. These decoys, which are obtainable in Cairo, are not of the ordinary 'penny plain' variety but come under the heading of the 'twopence coloured' superfine type, and each decoy is highly painted and represents a different breed of duck with the correct colouring. The obvious Oriental consequence is that the boys get every one wrong, with the result that normal wild duck flying above and seeing mallard swimming about with pochard heads and small teal with enormous shoveller equipment naturally come down out of sheer curiosity to see what it is all about and who has been mixing the breeds.

The great interest in Nile Valley duck-shooting, if one has any taste for ornithology, is the extraordinary variety of the bag that one obtains. It is possible sometimes to shoot a matter of thirty birds that comprise eleven different breeds of duck, such as mallard, pintail, shoveller, pochard, teal, gargany teal, ferruginous, gadwall, tufted, widgeon, and red-crested pochard, whereas a week later one may get in the same place an uninterest-

ing bag of shoveller only. Another peculiarity about this form of shooting from stands is that one gun may get forty duck all of which are shoveller and teal and three hundred yards to his right the second will obtain roughly the same bag in which gadwall and pintail predominate to the total exclusion of shoveller and teal.

In the centre of all these syndicate duck-shoots lies a vast expanse of rush-fringed pools called Mansourieh which is and always was a veritable bird sanctuary. On normal days, after the first ten minutes of the 9 a.m. fusillade, every duck in the vicinity rises to a great height and wings his way to Mansourieh, where he puts in an uproarious morning splashing and quacking to his heart's delight. Mansourieh used to belong to the late Prince Kamel el Din Hussein, who was so busily occupied with various other sporting properties that he was able to shoot Mansourieh only twice or three times a year. On these rare occasions countless thousands of duck, who had been having a most peaceful and well-fed existence on the princely marshes, arose in clouds and masses and proceeded to fly out over the shoots of the ordinary common people. If one happened to know when the Prince intended to shoot Mansourieh it was worth while putting off an audience with the King if one happened to be so engaged, but the trouble was that Prince Kamel el Din was of a whimsical turn of mind and took an impish delight in keeping his movements secret and the duck gunners completely in the dark. Occasionally in a moment of expansion he would impart the information to certain of his friends under oath of secrecy, but this depended entirely on what sort of luck he had been having in the streets of Cairo recently. The Prince was a very great autocrat, and as he was a member of the reigning house he was under the impression that he ought to be able to drive slap through any traffic signal in the crowded streets. Most of the traffic constables in Cairo are British, and the peculiarity about the British policeman, whether he serves in London or Cairo, is that the bigger the fish he catches the better he is pleased. There must be thousands of Metropolitan police who would love to get Mr. Baldwin driving against the red light. This is opposed entirely to Oriental ideas, which hold that the Great can do everything and the rest nothing. The result was that the Prince to his intense fury was hauled up on several occasions for flagrant disregard of traffic regulations, and this was a very great pity, for no action whatsoever was taken by the authorities and all the duck-shooting community suffered as the result, for, after

misplaced zeal of this description, no information of impending shoots at Mansourieh was disclosed in any circumstances. There was some reason, however, in the Prince's methods, for the adjoining shoot at Mansourieh happened to belong to the Commandant of Police who, it is said, organised special schools of instruction with photographs of His Highness in ten different positions to enable constables to recognise the Prince at a glance.

For the great and influential, duck-shooting is not so entirely peaceful and pleasurable as it is for smaller fry, for the Egyptians are above all things opportunists and believe firmly in a word whispered into the ear at the right moment. If Mohammed Fulani happens to be acting as duck boy to His Excellency the High Commissioner, the G.O.C. in C., or even a member of the Residency staff, he will at once become acquainted with the fact of his Gun's eminence and realise it is a commercial asset. His natural gift of second sight will inform him of all those who wish a grievance to be aired or have young relatives fitted for posts that influence might fill, and the gun boy has a positive flair for knowing the right moment for a request of this description. If he succeeds, he can count on remuneration according to services rendered, and so, after the Big Noise has brought off three difficult rights and lefts, he will say, 'Saahtak <sup>1</sup> shootit very good—very nice. I like to be gun boy to Saahtak always. I very poor-boy—my father he no work. He discharge from police for nothing. He very good man and if Saahtak write to Smithy Bey of Police he join Police again.' And the following day Smith Bey will receive a semi-official letter from the Residency requesting him if possible to re-engage Ombashi Ahmed Fulani who has been unjustly discharged by his Egyptian superior, and Smith Bey, who has just sacked Fulani with ignominy for a disgraceful case of participating in the drug traffic, will thoroughly appreciate the joke.

Some years ago the Sheikship of one of the Sinai tribes fell vacant and there were many applicants for the post—the most insistent of whom was a rather oily individual from the Ekkiad district who geographically had no claim whatsoever; but, though his place of abode disqualified him in one way, it put him in a very strong position in another, as he was one of the small land-owners on the Residency shoot and as a matter of course was always in attendance. The result of this was that regularly once a week during the winter I received a letter from some member of

<sup>1</sup> Your Excellency.

the staff urging the claims of Sheikh Obeid Egara, and I had a sealed pattern reply which said that though Obeid may have proved a most efficient duck retriever at Ekkiad, this did not constitute any claim to a Sheikhship in Sinai, where no duck existed and where his special qualities would not be apparent.

The snipe-shooting of Egypt is not organised on quite the same scale as that of duck, which is due partly to the uncertain movements of the snipe, the equally uncertain movement of the water in the big marshes, which rises or falls a foot according to the wind, and also to the fact that so far the Dago and Egyptian sportsmen of Cairo have not yet been able to bring themselves to expend a threepenny cartridge on a bird not much bigger than a sparrow, and a very elusive one at that. It is, after all, not so very long ago in the world's history since no Egyptian dreamed of firing a shot at duck unless they were sitting on the water and there were at least ten of them in a bunch. It will take almost a dynasty—which is the accepted method of measuring time in Egypt—before they can bring themselves to blaze off two threepenny shots at a twisting, squawking bird that is, after all, only a mouthful to an ordinary hungry man.

Most of the best snipe grounds are in the vicinity of Lake Menzaleh, which is fed by the Damietta branch of the Nile. Here there are thousands of square acres of bog and reedy marsh, but the sport is always uncertain as the snipe is such a queer fanciful bird and, as has already been mentioned, a change of wind may raise the water level of the lake at the Damietta end so that what was an attractive bog yesterday, providing a first-class feeding ground for snipe, is to-day a sheet of water over a foot deep and absolutely useless. The snipe of Egypt prefer above all things a stretch of marsh that has been used as a buffalo wallow and grazing ground, and this is very wise from their point of view as no gun can do himself justice in going of this description. The ground, or rather mud, is covered to a depth of three inches with water, but every yard there is a small tussocky scrub bush standing just above the level of the water that has consolidated the soil with its roots in its close vicinity. The buffaloes wandering about in this marsh have pared down the sides of these tussocks with their great splay hooves till each one is shaped like a small and very slippery pyramid, whilst in between they have churned up a practically bottomless and narrow pit of mud and water. One's normal rate of progress in this slough of despond is about a hun-



dred yards an hour, and every time a bird rises one is caught in the same sort of position as that adopted by marble statues depicting Greek youths starting for a run, i.e. one leg bent so that the knee is nearly on a level with the chest and the other stretched to its fullest extent, with all the tendons, nerves, and muscles cracking. This is a very graceful pose, but, though it is admirably suited to a slim, naked Greek boy throwing a discus or jumping off for a hundred-yards' sprint, it is not so well adapted to a well-covered, plus-foured sportsman who is trying to align his barrels on a twisting, hurtling snipe. Every ten minutes or so when struggling to draw a foot out of the sucking mud one falls prone, dipping one's gun into the viscid liquid and soaking the cartridges in one's bag. It is, however, most excellent sport, for if the birds are in they are rising at the rate of one every half-minute and it is no unusual thing to achieve the height of the snipe-shooter's ambition and bag a hundred to one's gun.

Recently, however, the Egyptian Government have instituted great drainage schemes at Damietta and elsewhere, so that every year a matter of a thousand acres of attractive snipe bog is turned into not so attractive but more remunerative fields of clover, cotton, and maize. At the present rate of land reclamation it is quite possible that in twenty or thirty years' time Egypt will have ceased to be a home for migrating duck and snipe, for the simple reason that no feeding grounds for wild-fowl will exist. And when this is the case it will be exceedingly difficult for some of the officials in Egypt to fill in their time.

A bird that has caused a considerable amount of correspondence since the War, and I believe has been honoured by having his case stated at the League of Nations, is the quail. Like Abyssinia, I gather the idea at the back of the minds at Geneva was that they wished to protect it, and so far they have been just as successful with the quail as they were with Abyssinia. That is to say, screeds have been written about the little brown bird and the horrors that are inflicted upon him sufficient to bring tears to the eyes of every quail-eating gourmet, but definitely nothing has been done about it. A Committee consisting of most of the bird slaughterers of Egypt was formed in Cairo, and at their first meeting they passed a minute deploring the netting of quail by the Sinai Arabs in the autumn and held me responsible. I held a meeting of the leading quail-netters of Sinai and a resolution was voted lamenting the destruction of quail by the gunners of the Nile Valley in the

spring when they are paired off. Like Baron Aloisi's gestures of injured innocence at Geneva, this sent the Quail Protection Committee into a flat spin and since then nothing has been heard of their activities.

The situation is as follows: the quail—who is a most attractive little fellow of the partridge species—lives and has his being in the south of Russia, Hungary, Rumania, etc., but unfortunately for himself he decided very many years ago, as far back as Moses in fact, to spend over six months abroad. This is a quite understandable action as there are several thousands of sun-seeking, income-tax-evading retired Colonels, Admirals, and Generals doing the same thing to-day. The income-tax officials of both their country of origin and their country of choice are spreading nets to trap these elusive birds, and the Arabs of Sinai and the Western Desert do precisely the same with the quail. The only difference is that the Sinai Arabs are far more successful than the income-tax officials, which is probably due to the fact that there is nothing quite so artful as a retired Colonel. The quail has always been a fool, and it will be recalled that during the Wanderings of the Israelites in Sinai the host knocked them down by the thousand with palm branches.

In the autumn the quails leave Mid-Europe and fly across the Mediterranean, landing on the northern coasts of Egypt from Mersa-Matruh in the west to Rafa on the Palestine frontier. It has never been proved exactly how long they take over the journey, but it is presumed that the flight from their summer feeding grounds to the Egyptian coast is done in one hop. The birds are extremely tired when they arrive and usually appear in the half-light before dawn in groups of tens, twenties, or thirties flying extremely low. They land immediately they reach the shore and at once scuttle off to the nearest patch of cover, where they rest for the whole of that day. The following morning they start off again to their destination in Abyssinia, the Sudan and Lake Chad districts, which apparently they accomplish in another hop as there is no record of their alighting in any number in any other part of Egypt during the autumn migration, which lasts from about the 20th August till the 20th October. On their return in the latter part of February and during March they drop in on the cultivation the whole way up the Nile and apparently proceed northwards to the coast in a very leisurely manner.

Unfortunately for the quail he is not only extremely succulent,

but is also most easy to catch, and 3,500 years of persecution appears to have taught him nothing. He is captured by a variety of methods, the most usual being a very light trammel net 12 feet high suspended on high poles along the seashore—and for the benefit of those who do not know a trammel, it is a very fine net with a close mesh hanging in front of another net with a very large mesh. When the bird hits the first net he forces a portion through the meshes of the second and then drops imprisoned in a twine pocket. Another very ingenious method employed by the Arabs is to put a small portion of net on the south side of every patch of scrub on the shore, and, if scrub does not exist, to manufacture artificial hides of rushes with an entrance to the north and an exit to the south. The southern side is always netted and not the north, for the quail is a stupid little fellow and has never yet learned that the hole by which he entered must of necessity be clear. He is in such a hurry to continue his flight that with the first light of dawn he bustles out to the south and finds himself caught in the net. The birds are then shipped alive in small basket-work crates to England, France, and Italy, where the gourmets of these countries in between mouthfuls of quails in aspic mumble their righteous indignation at the brutality of the quail trade, and then go home and write to the papers about it.

There is no justification for the quail trade, as people can live very easily without these attractive birds and there must be hundreds of thousands of lusty specimens of humanity who have never even tasted one. The amusing part about the business, however, is that Great Britain and France get all hot and bothered about the quail trade and expect the ignorant Bedouin Arab, who does not know the meaning of the word cruelty, to refrain from netting out of the goodness of his heart. The obvious solution, of course, is for both these countries to pass a law prohibiting the import of quail. If they do this, quail-netting will cease, as the Arab most certainly will not catch them for the fun of the thing or the sport. The demand, however, exists, and so long as the import of the birds into the enlightened civilised countries of Europe is permitted, so long will the unenlightened Arab, badly in need of a few piastres, continue to net them for the market.

Statistics go to prove that the quail is being exterminated, as 1,200,000 birds were exported in 1908, and in 1926 the number had dropped to 500,000. These figures, however, are not definite proof, as there are good years and bad for the quail migration,

and moreover in 1908 there were no regulations whatsoever to restrict quail-netting, and, since the War, laws have been enforced prohibiting the erection of nets within 500 yards of the shore and the provision of gaps in the barrier one-quarter of the length of the netting erected. These regulations, properly enforced, might easily in themselves account for a falling of 500,000 birds—or, to put it more pleasingly, allow for half a million jolly little brown birds evading 'the net that is set in their sight.'

When the quail return in the spring and make their leisurely progress through the cultivation of the Nile Valley they should be protected most vigorously, for all these birds are definitely paired off in anticipation of the breeding season that will start immediately they arrive in Europe; but unfortunately the mass assassination brigade of Cairo and Alexandria, who are so shocked at Arab netting, wish to have some sport with them, and so innumerable little married couples are broken up, and it is a very moot point whether the bereaved birds find another mate that season.

The shooting of quail in the spring in Egypt is, on the whole, a thoroughly unattractive sport. In the first place, the bird gets up very close and is a moderately slow and perfectly straight flyer, and with a big pattern of No. 9 shot almost anybody should get sixty birds to a hundred cartridges. The only thing that makes quail-shooting at all difficult is the fact that one is shooting in the midst of the cultivation and the fields are swarming with men, women, children, donkeys, camels, and water buffaloes. It is like shooting across a chessboard with most of the pieces in position, and when a quail rises there are just three or four small gaps where the bird can be taken without plastering a fellah up behind or sending an old water-wheel camel careering across the landscape trailing his pole and half the mechanism behind him. Also in addition to old women and donkeys, who are too stupid to realise they are in the line of fire, there is a large and growing class of cultivator who has not the slightest objection to a few pellets of No. 9's in his seat provided he gets adequate compensation. Tilling the soil in Egypt to-day is a most unremunerative calling and there is a very strong temptation to get an invulnerable part of the body in the line of fire and then search the soul for sounds to show how sorely wounded they are. The yells of anguish that arise are so heart-rending and sudden that the reckless gunner feels that he will be well out of it with £1 compensation, and at

the first rustle of the note the howls cease with an abruptness that is almost as startling as was the suddenness of the opening notes.

Years ago I used to shoot a few quail in the spring in the corn patches of El Arish, but I gave it up because in the first place I realised I was shooting paired birds and, secondly, because of the danger, or rather the certainty, of hitting somebody. Actually, on the last occasion I peppered two men—one in the back and one with two pellets close to the eye. I had walked round the patch of corn first to satisfy myself that no one was in it, and so was not only horrified but amazed when these two men walked up afterwards displaying their wounds.

‘But where were you?’ I asked. ‘You weren’t in the corn when I started to shoot.’

‘Oh no,’ they said, ingenuously, ‘we crawled into it on all fours after you had begun to walk through it.’

The people of Sinai are far less sophisticated than the men of the Nile Valley, and I was not certain if they had got peppered deliberately or from mere crass stupidity. It was possibly sheer idiocy, for I have discovered that the Arab thinks that the flimsiest and most diaphanous materials are proof against bullets and other harmful things. Only the other day an Arab sergeant of my Police squeezed with his finger and thumb a huge hornet that was entangled in a mosquito net. He jumped three feet in the air and shouted, ‘Wallahi [Oh, my God], he stung me through that.’ If a man thinks that a fine bit of mushn netting will ward off a hornet’s sting, he no doubt firmly believes that a few shoots of barley will keep out a .303 bullet.

In addition to being poor and distinctly dangerous sport, quail-shooting is most unfair to the unfortunate cultivator, as the guns walk through standing corn and clover and do an incalculable amount of harm, and the owner of the crops gets no compensation whatsoever. The shikaris bring out people to shoot from the cities and walk them indiscriminately over everybody’s land regardless of the damage done. Occasionally some long-suffering fellah will protest, but the shikari will yell him down with storms of abuse and vociferous lies to the effect that the sportsmen he is accompanying are Police Officers, Irrigation Engineers, or some other officials who will ruin the life of anyone who interferes with their sport, and then explain to his party that the owner of the land is so delighted to see the guns in his crops that he hopes they

will all come out again next Friday. 'Very nice people here, sare,' he says; 'they like the English sportsman too much.'

A great deal has been heard of the 'wild' pigeon-shooting of the Nile Valley, owing to the Denshawai incident of 1906, when a party of British officers who were shooting near Tanta at the invitation of the *Omdeh* (Mayor) of the village were set upon by the inhabitants and so knocked about that one of them died from the effects. The episode caused considerable ill-feeling for some time owing to the severity of the punishments meted out to the attackers, of whom several were hanged and a large number imprisoned and flogged. The laws of Egypt concerning the death sentence ordain that the capital punishment is awarded only in cases where premeditation is clearly proved, and in a free fight of this description it is quite obvious there could have been no premeditation, and probably no real desire to kill.

It seems strange that the people of a village should become violently incensed at a party shooting wild pigeons when the guns had been specially invited there by the head man of the area, and the explanation is so entirely Oriental that it is no wonder that the British officers failed to understand the situation. In almost every village in the Nile Valley there is a big mud-brick tower which is a pigeon-cote and these, or something very similar to them, have been in existence for thousands of years. The pigeons that occupy these cotes are by way of being the ordinary blue rock of the desert, but they are not quite pure bred, as if several are shot it will be found that few if any are absolutely true to colour. It is probable that they are the descendants of blue rocks domesticated thousands of years ago and have become slightly mixed by the introduction of domestic stock.

These cotes usually belong to the *Omdeh* or one of the big men of the village and have been handed down from father to son. It is a most remunerative business, as the squabs or young pigeons fetch three piastres ( $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ ) each, the manure sells readily at sixty piastres (12s.) a camel-load, and the joke of the whole business is that there is no food bill, as the pigeons feed on the crops of the cote-owner's neighbours. The neighbours who have had to provide this pigeon free-lunch-counter for some hundreds if not thousands of years have never really become reconciled to it, and their method of getting square is to invite—with the light of candour and truthfulness in their eyes—a party of sportsmen to come and shoot 'wild' pigeons in their village. They will so place the

guns that the pigeon-cote is screened by a clump of date palms and the innocent sportsmen therefore believe implicitly that they have struck the most wonderful flight of desert blue rocks coming in from the great wastes of the Sahara. All goes well until the cote-owner and his relatives turn up with *nabbutts* (staves), when the kindly hosts basely desert their friends and leave them to deal with the situation as best they can. This is the technique of 'wild' pigeon-shooting in the Nile Valley, and on the whole it is best to regard this form of sport as having a permanent 'close season.'

For a perfectly flat and intensely cultivated country Egypt offers very fair sporting possibilities, but she has to depend almost entirely on migratory birds, and, if action is not taken very shortly to limit bags or in some way curtail the excessive and unnecessary slaughter, it is more than probable that in another twenty years the vast flights of migrating duck and snipe will be a thing of the past. There has been a marked falling off in numbers during the last decade which is likely to continue, and once the routine of nature is definitely broken nothing will ever bring the migrants back again.

[Of '*Three Deserts*,' by C. S. Jarvis, which is just published, Lord Lloyd writes: '*Since Lord Edward Cecil's famous book I have read nothing where knowledge, wisdom and laughter were so happily blended.*']

### STATUESQUE.

HER face. . . .

sudden it marble seemed  
that never breath of passion felt,  
a sculptor's figment to mould and melt  
and mock the brighter vision dreamed  
of flesh and blood.

But a slender vein  
in her temple's clear unclouded sky  
beat quick with life; the smouldering pain  
in my soul blazed into flame and I  
was trapped again in the silver mesh  
of Aphrodite's loveliness,  
and knew in my weary heart afresh  
the stab of beauty's bitterness.

K. BATHURST.

*WILLIAM TYNDALE.*

BY HELEN LIKEMAN.

FOUR hundred years ago an Englishman was put to death at the castle of Vilvorde and the queen of England gave her husband an English version of the New Testament. The two events were not unconnected, for it was in 1536 that William Tyndale was martyred, and it was his translation that the ill-starred Anne Boleyn in the same year presented to the king.

It is given to few men to accomplish in their lifetime what they set out to do, but as a young man in Gloucestershire Tyndale had silenced an opponent with the words, 'I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the scripture than thou doest.' He lived to see ploughboy and king read his translation and before he died his name was a household word in England. What he could not have known was that his work was to prove such an intensive force in English literature and that the speech and thoughts of unborn generations were to be shaped and influenced by his matchless prose.

He was a west-country man, born about 1484 on the 'borders of Wales'—probably at Slymbridge in Gloucestershire. He was up at Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1510, and had taken his B.A. two years later. Those were the days of the New Learning, when a few years previously John Colet had defied tradition and radically changed the method of scriptural study. Tyndale went to Cambridge, probably attracted by the great name of Erasmus. In 1522, a priest and an M.A., he went down to Gloucestershire as tutor to Sir John Walsh's children. His leisure he spent in preaching in the villages and on College Green at Bristol, and he aroused much antagonism by his new ideas and frank criticism, but became convinced that the only cure for Church and people was the translation of the Bible into the common tongue. To this end he went to London, but found the bishop—Cuthbert Tunstall—unwilling to help him. For some time he was preacher at St. Dunstan's-in-the-West, and there he made many friends, amongst whom were Humphrey of Monmouth, merchant, and John Frith, Protestant martyr.

He found it impossible to complete his translation in England and in 1524 went to Hamburg. He visited Luther (whom he had



long admired) at Wittenberg and finally arrived at Cologne. His amanuensis was a certain William Roy and they made great headway with the translation before Cochlaeus, dean of the Blessed Virgin at Frankfurt, discovered them. They fled to Worms, where the New Testament was printed by Schoeffer. Smuggled into England, the translation had a great sale; in vain was Tunstall's denunciation from St. Paul's Cross, in vain the threats of excommunication and the outcry of the clergy. It was the people's book, written for them and read by them, destined with the Book of Common Prayer to pass into their language and become a part of the national life and character.

Tyndale was for a time at Marburg, where he knew Philip, landgrave of Hesse, and Buschius, professor of poetry at the university. But, 'in journeyings often' and 'in perils of the sea,' he came at last in 1529 to that grey northern town on the waters of the Schelde where the final chapter was to be written.

They were busy years at Antwerp. There was his famous controversy with Sir Thomas More, when literary talent defending the authority of the Church was defied by individual judgment forcefully and vividly expressed; he produced *The Practice of Prelates* and *The Obedience of a Christian Man*; he translated the Pentateuch, adding his bitter marginal notes, and the Book of Jonah and probably worked at those manuscript translations of the remainder of the Old Testament which were finally published by Miles Coverdale, and he revised his translation of the New Testament.

There was a house in Antwerp known as 'The English House,' kept by Thoms Poyntz for the merchant adventurers, and here Tyndale in 1534 took up his abode. He had so far escaped his enemies and but for the advent of a Judas might have spent many years in comparative seclusion among his friends. But men died suddenly in those days, and it was perhaps fitting that such a troublous life should have a stormy ending.

In the spring of 1535 Henry Phillips, a young student of Louvain, whom Tyndale had befriended, betrayed him to the imperial officers. It is probable that he took this step on his own initiative, but one of his assistants was Gabriel Donne. It is not recorded whether the calm of Buckfastleigh was marred for the worthy abbot by any regrets in his later years.

Tyndale was imprisoned in the fortress of Vilvorde, and there he contrived to finish his translation of the Old Testament. In spite

of the efforts of his friends to bring about his release, he was tried for heresy, and was condemned by the Augsburg Assembly in October, 1536. On the 6th of that month he was strangled and burnt at the stake. As the flames at last shut out the grey October day, he thought of England. 'Lord,' he cried, 'open the king of England's eyes!' And fifty years away in Stratford the words echoed still:

'Heaven will one day open  
The king's eyes.' (*Henry VIII*, II, ii.)

Because Tyndale used the language of the common people of England, in time his translation became a part of their tradition, like folklore and ballads. In his lifetime he saw Erasmus's dream fulfilled, who when speaking of the scriptures said that he longed for the day when 'the husbandman shall sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough; when the weaver shall hum them to the time of his shuttle; when the traveller shall while away with their stories the weariness of his journey.'

There had, of course, been translations of the Bible before the sixteenth century, but for various reasons they had not made any profound impression on the English people or their language. The Anglo-Saxon translation attained a high literary level, but in Norman times and in succeeding centuries there was no common speech. Wyclif's version of the Vulgate (1384) was marred by a too exact rendering of the Latin idiom, and English in his day was still in a stage of transition. There was no printing to give it fixity, and later generations would have been unable to understand Wyclif's language. Even had the earlier versions been literary masterpieces, there was little encouragement given to the people to read them, in fact; it was an ecclesiastical offence to do so.

Tyndale brought to his work superb scholarship and great literary power. In his Revised Version 80 per cent. of the words stand as they did in 1525. His accuracy was endorsed by the editors of the Authorised Version, and Jowett when speaking of the latter said that 'in a certain sense it was more inspired than the original.' The simplicity of Tyndale's style, force, and lack of pedantry was enriched by the preservation of Hebrew idiom. Froude speaks of the 'peculiar genius . . . which breathes through it, the mingled tenderness and majesty, the Saxon simplicity, the preternatural grandeur.' Such a verse as 'Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God

who gave it ' (Ecclesiastes xii. 7) is only equalled by Shakespeare's ' After life's fitful fever he sleeps well ' (*Macbeth*, III. ii).

And in Revelation we have a list of glittering words that pictures all the pomp and glory of this world. It reads like a Masfield poem. ' The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and of fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyne wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble. And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.'

The impetus of the Reformation (which gave birth to the translation) facilitated by the advent of the printing press incited ' all men everywhere ' to study the Bible. It is conceivable that a mediocre translation of the Greek might have had an important effect on the religious life of the people; it could never have been a vital force in their literature, moulding their language and forming their speech. The debt which the language owes to Shakespeare, who actually has more new words in his plays than all the rest of the English poets put together (Pearsall Smith), does not far exceed that which it owes to the Authorised Version.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century the elements of the language had fused and taken on a form and style. Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, Norman-French, Latin, and Greek had mixed and mingled to form a rich and varied vocabulary. The revival of learning, although it laid emphasis on the classical languages to the detriment of the national speech, did create a love of beautiful words and phrases and a desire for a fine, elegant style. It was an age of adventure and experiment and this was reflected in the language of the time. The religious controversy of the Reformation created many new words and phrases (chiefly terms of abuse which the combatants flung at one another, e.g. dunce, popishness, pernicious), but it was an age when feeling ran high, and when men have something to say they will usually find some means of expression even if they have to invent it.

Tyndale found at his disposal words hallowed by centuries of religious feeling and other words used by the people to express their vigorous and often crude emotions. He himself enriched the language by the use of ' godly,' ' long-suffering,' ' broken-hearted,' ' mercifulness,' ' peacemaker ' (incomparably better than ' pesible men ') and that useful word ' beautiful.' Many words and phrases

would have passed out of the language had not Tyndale used them and so preserved them for future generations, e.g. damsel, quick (= alive) travail (= labour). But he was no mere recorder of the speech around him. His language throughout is infused with the spirit of that new self-consciousness, that awareness of one's own emotions and aspirations which marks the difference in thought between modern times and the objectiveness of the Middle Ages.

We still speak the idiom and use the metaphors of the Authorised Version, and we do this unconsciously, without any thought of their origin. When we speak of a 'babel of voices,' 'a lost sheep,' 'Naboth's vineyard,' 'the worship of mammon,' 'a leviathan,' 'a labour of love,' 'a howling wilderness,' or 'the eleventh hour,' everyone knows what we mean and no explanation is necessary.

In no other language as in English can one get those subtle changes of meaning by the use of different words to describe the same thing. The distinction between such words as kingly and royal, felicity and happiness, brotherhood and fraternity, is so slight as to be almost beyond elucidation, yet it is such synonyms which give the language its clarity, colour and elasticity. Of such, the Authorised Version provides many examples and Tyndale was ever alive to the subtle shades of meaning which lie in a word. In his first version of the New Testament he translated 'presbuteros' as 'senior,' later he substituted 'elder' and, in so doing, gave another sense to the word.

The Tudors established a strong national monarchy, and under the Teutonic influence of the Reformation the Roman Church gave place to the Church of England; an enthusiasm for things English was engendered; Latin gave place to a more general use of English and men became aware of themselves as members of a great nation.

Tyndale, by his translation of the Bible and the consequent creation of the Book of Common Prayer, made Englishmen aware of the potentialities and possibilities of their language. He did not use a pedantic style to demonstrate to the intellectual few, but took the common speech and proved once and for all of what the language is capable. He aroused in the people of his day a pride in their heritage, and although four centuries have gone by we still have to surpass much of his prose.

He gave to his countrymen a touchstone or standard by which the merits of their literature might be measured. That a great deal of what has since been written falls below that standard is inevitable, but it is an undisputable fact that all great English

writers since the sixteenth century owe something to the English version of the Bible and Tyndale's style has had a tremendous effect on English prose, which at its best is remarkable for its clarity, dignity and versatility. The names of Milton, Bacon, Defoe, Burke and a host of nineteenth-century writers rise to the mind. The eighteenth century, that age of classicism, can give its examples. The following is from the *Spectator*, 289th number, dated January 31, 1712, and is an extract from an essay on Death :

‘ In short, I would have everyone consider, that he is in this Life Nothing more than a Passenger, and that he is not to set up his Rest here, but to keep an attentive Eye upon that State of Being to which he approaches every Moment, and which will be for ever fixed and permanent. This single Consideration would be sufficient to extinguish the Bitterness of Hatred, the Thirst of Avarice, and the Cruelty of Ambition.’

The following is typical of Hardy's constant use of the Authorised Version to provide simile and metaphor.

‘ In the meantime, Marian and Izz Huett had journeyed onward with the chattels of the ploughman in the direction of their land of Canaan—the Egypt of some other family who had left it only that morning’ (*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*).

Until the advent of modern progress and compulsory education the people's speech was that of the Authorised Version and this often caused a sudden flowering in unexpected places, of which the Bedford tinker and his *Pilgrim's Progress* is a superb example.

Had there been no translation of the Bible it is probable that English history and consequently world history might have been written differently. Tyndale was the first Puritan, and by his translation he gave to his countrymen something more than literature : that aspect of the national character which is least understood by Englishmen themselves and not at all by foreigners ; that sturdiness, strange uprightness and mysticism which at its best produced the Pilgrim Fathers and John Hampden ; that spirit which made the English slave sweating out his life in Algiers hesitate to escape because his master had paid good money for him. It is a debatable point to-day whether the British Empire has been a benefit to the world, but it is beyond question that the Authorised Version played an important part in the building of that empire. It went far towards making ‘ This happy breed of men, this little world, This precious stone, set in the silver sea.’

*THE PATH OF THE PYGMY PRIESTS.**A TRUE STORY.*

BY ROBERT M. MACDONALD.

WE were in Wambarima, the village of the Pygmies of New Guinea, and, although we knew that our lives were protected by the strange tribal laws of the little people while we were in Wambarima, we also had the opinion that those laws might function differently if we tried to escape from it. All the same, we meant to try to get away when opportunity offered.

But getting out of Wambarima was not so easy as getting into it. We had never intended to enter the Pygmy village, but had stumbled across it unknowingly while escaping from a horde of head-hunting savages who had attacked us. Only then did we realise that the lure of gold had led us northward through the New Guinean ranges into Dutch territory, and we were almost glad that our fourteen carrier 'boys' had deserted us long ago. We six prospectors carried 'the White Man's Burden' (a feeling that fire-arms must not be used against natives unless in self-defence), but our carrier 'boys' had often made that load needlessly heavy. However, we had no reason to feel the weight of the white man's burden now, for the Pygmies were friendly little fellows, though their frizzed hair carried blow-pipe darts like needles in a pin-cushion, but still we felt rather helpless.

The Sepik River, down which we might float to the nearest Dutch Police Station, lay about two miles off, and we could not hope to be able to cut our way through the dense forest entanglements which separated us from the river before the Pygmies would miss our presence, and, even if we did manage to reach the Sepik, the village of the head-hunters from whom we had already escaped was hidden somewhere on the other side. Those warriors wanted our heads badly. They were by no means of a pygmy build, some of them being over six feet in height. They never raided the Pygmies, and only came into Wambarima when invited to do so, or for purposes of trade.

We had thought at first that the big savages feared the

little fellows because they were deadly in the use of the blow-pipe and could attack from the branches of trees as readily as from the ground, but we had soon discovered that the head-hunters kept in the good graces of the Pygmies for quite another reason. This was that the Pygmies were the makers of a mysterious drink they brewed or otherwise prepared from roots and leaves and, I believe, nuts, which they traded in only with friends. This secret drink was called by a name which we had heard before among the mountain tribes which sounded like 'Joy Drink,' and we knew it by that name. It caused the natives who partook of it to be supremely happy and forgetful of all worries, but we had a great contempt for it as it looked like soapy water, tasted like sour milk, and had no effect, so far as we knew, upon us.

We fraternised freely with the little people and were very popular among them. They were of a higher mentality than most other New Guinean tribes we had met, but a little pot-bellied sorcerer named Kalli assured us that, as the Pygmies were the descendants of bird-men, their mental superiority over other tribes who came from animals of the forest was only natural. We agreed with him. We could do that by looking wise, and it saved us airing our views on the Darwinian theory in a dialect we only partly understood. The Pygmy men could beat us in most sports, being stronger, though they could pass under our outstretched arms, and fleet of foot, but they had a subtle sense of humour which found vent in their allowing us to think we could beat them—until the last moment. Then they disillusioned us!

One day while talking to Kalli he suddenly became serious and said to me, in English he had picked up from us, 'You white men must get away from here. The priests no' like you an' mean kill you.'

'Thanks for telling me, Kalli,' I said. 'We have guessed that the priests were jealous of us. We can't help ourselves though. We can't cut our way through the forest down to the river as quickly as your warriors can run along the tree-tops overhead. We'd rather fight things out here when the time comes.'

'You have no hope. You be killed when priests say word without know anyting 'bout it. Why you no go away to-night when big feast is held. People then be full of Joy Drink an' too sleepy go after you. Me show you secret track down to big river which priests use when visit village of head-hunting warriors on other side.'

'If you can show us a track to the water, Kalli, you can depend on our leaving Wambarima in a hurry——'

'Then get all your white fellow mates an' come wi' me now. I show you, an' I already have got big war canoe hide down at river fo' you. Come, quick an' lively.'

I was greatly alarmed at the information Kalli had given me, and walking over to the erection which had been given us in which to stay while in the village I roused my sleepy comrades and speedily made them acquainted also.

A few minutes later we went out and saw Kalli strolling past our house, apparently, aimlessly. Keeping our eyes on him, and also seeing that no inquisitive little native was watching us, we dodged behind a clump of bamboos and plunged into a patch of tall grass-like cereals which completely hid us from sight. Still following Kalli as best we could, and careful that we did not tramp on snakes or other dangerous creatures of the ground, we traversed the cultivated patch and soon came out on the edge of the encroaching forest land. Kalli was now beside us, a victim of a fear that filled his being, and, signing to us to mark well the route by which we had come, he led us a few yards into the network of undergrowths, and presently we stood on a well-defined narrow pathway which wound its way through arching vegetation, like a tunnel, in the direction of the Sepik River.

'This is Priests' Path,' Kalli said (in effect); 'it is "tapoo" (forbidden) to the people and is guarded by blow-pipe men who are also priests. It leads to the river.'

'How about making a bolt for it now, mates?' suggested Sydney Charlie; 'Kalli has a canoe down at the river.'

We looked at each other. Our chance of escape lay before us. Why not take it?

'No go away now!' broke in Kalli, perspiration bursting out all over his brown body. 'Blow-pipe men watch path. They kill white fellows with poison-darts, an' white fellow's pop-pops (revolvers) no use, fo' blow-pipe men no' be seen.'

'We've got to take some risks, Kalli,' I said, patting the little man on the shoulder. 'If we don't go now we may not get another chance.'

'Kalli say wait fo' big feast to-night,' the fear-stricken native stuttered. 'Joy Drink make all people sleepy, an' blow-pipe men be at feast too. White fellows get away then, no' seen by any.'

'All right, Kalli,' laughed Big Tassie. 'You can feel easy



about the matter. We'll wait until that feast of to-night is over before making our try to escape.'

Big Tassie having decided as he had done, there was nothing for us to say, and we retraced our steps and returned to our house resolved to leave nothing to chance. There we were glad to get rid of Kalli; his fear of results was certainly greater than ours, but it had a depressing influence.

The great tribal celebrations to commemorate some important event in Pygmy history were to take place that night, and the fires in the village square were ablaze early in the afternoon so that there should be plenty of hot ashes for cooking operations, by night. When that time duly arrived we sallied forth to show ourselves among the populace. It seemed as if the entire population of Wambarima, somewhere about 400, had assembled in the square that night, but we were told that many of the old men and women had only come out from their thatched and mat-walled houses in order to fraternise with some tall head-hunters who had come in to Wambarima from over the river to attend the celebrations. Nevertheless, we were somewhat surprised to notice that all the visitors were fully armed, it being not the best of manners for visitors to display clubs and spears in Wambarima!

The village itself was not greatly different in appearance from other large villages in New Guinea. It consisted of quaint, thatched houses mounted on platforms which were themselves raised about six or seven feet above the ground. The walls were made of mats of some kind which served as both windows and doors. Pigs, hens and other domesticated animals lived all together in the stockaded part of each house underneath the dwelling part. A large Tapoo House (church), a long, low, thatched erection in which was manufactured the famous 'Joy Drink,' and some other public buildings of which we did not know the nature completed all that we were ever allowed to see of the village, but we knew that some tree dwellings near the tapoo house held secrets hidden from all but priests.

But we did not feel concerned with Pygmy secrets, though we certainly did not like the presence of the tall savages from over the Sepik. Soon they ceased to receive any attention from us, however, for a band comprised of tom-tom players, and other artists who could produce sounds dear to the Pygmy heart by blowing into bamboo flute-like instruments, took up its position near the central fire, and at a signal from the Chief Priest, who

was dressed to resemble a crocodile, it shattered the night with weird noises. The square was already illuminated with torches and coco-nut bowl lanterns, and the Pygmy women, bedecked in gaudy flowers and feathers, gathered together at one end, while the men, their frizzed hair stuffed with blow-pipe darts, ornamental blow-pipes slung round their bare, dark brown shoulders, and coco-nut fibre, kilted garments round the middle of their bodies, collected at an opposite end.

Then, as the music reached a well-known point in loudness and speed, the two parties rushed towards each other with jerky but more or less synchronised movements, met in the middle, and, with shouts that vied with the music, intermingled and separated into groups of dancers, who then, seemingly, pranced all over the square. The tall savages, who had been looking on near us, suddenly yelled in delight and joined in the dancing throng, and soon after, our comrade Mac emitted a sort of howl that somehow reminded me of far-away Scotland and began jumping about amongst the dancers as if he were an amorous Pygmy himself. He seemed odd, however; he was five feet eleven in height and wore belted trousers! The rest of us accepted coco-nut bowls of Joy Drink, handed to us by some junior Pygmy priests, and afterwards, thinking it bad form to try to maintain the white man's dignity, we joined the dancers too.

The feasting had started, and was going on all the time, dancers squatting round the hot ashes of any fire, when they found vacant places, and helping themselves to sausage-like clusters of beetle larvæ, wild pig, winged things and weird-looking fish. The birds and fish were entire, having been covered with mud before being placed in the hot ashes so as to ensure perfect cooking, but the feathers and scales easily came off, with the encrustations, in the hands and teeth of the diners. Ball-like masses of seed, vegetable and fruit composition were also in the ashes, ready for eating at any time, and the famous Joy Drink was continually being dispensed to all by attending priests and sorcerers.

By the time the moon was over the ridges which flanked the Sepik valley the dancers were in a state of irresponsibility and complete happiness brought on by indulgence in the wonderful Joy Drink, and many had already retired. In a way, we were glad that the Pygmies could find happiness so easily, but we were inclined to be scornful when we saw that the tall head-hunters also had been so affected that most of them had had to absent

themselves, doubtless to sleep off the drink's influence. Evidently they, although bigger in every way than we were, could not stand the Joy Drink like white men.

Now was the time for our escape, so, discreetly slipping away, one by one, we collected our few treasured belongings in our house and stole quietly out again through its matted walls, heading in the direction of the Sepik River, and armed with all the tools we had collected for cutting through the forest entanglements.

But progress soon ceased to be easy, and in time it almost ceased. We were tired, and forcing a track through New Guinean forest entanglements was a task beyond our powers, especially at night time.

'We'll never make the river, boys,' grunted Big Tassie despairingly, as we rested for a moment.

'We can't be far from it now,' Mac answered, wiping mosquitoes from his perspiring face. 'Anyhow, we've got to keep on trying to get there, for the Pygmy warriors will be blowing poisoned darts into us from the trees overhead if we delay here——'

'Well, what does it matter?' someone muttered. 'We can shoot the blow-pipe monkeys in the trees over our heads as well here as farther on. Of course, the little beggars will kill us before we do much damage to them, but——'

'We were fools to leave Wambarima,' another voice chimed in, and I scarcely recognised it as belonging to Sydney Charlie. 'We always knew we couldn't cut a track to the darned river unless we had plenty of time. Why are we escaping from the little fellows in any case?—they wouldn't eat us——'

'Great Grampians!' shouted Mac, interrupting Sydney Charlie's words. 'We're out of our senses! We forgot the Priests' Path!'

At the same moment as recollection of past events came to Mac a flood of memory suddenly rushed through my being and I cried excitedly, 'We've lost our memory, boys. Kalli showed us the Priests' pathway this very day and we meant to escape by it. We've forgotten that it existed——'

'Lor', that Joy Drink must have played skittles with our memory boxes, mates,' interjected someone in tones which suggested the speaker was somewhat amused. 'I vote that we shuttle back over our tracks and start again on the secret track——'

'No fear,' said Big Tassie; 'we couldn't see our own back tracks in the dark, and anyhow I'm sure I hear the old river just

ahead of us. Listen!—Was that not the sound of some crocodile or something big splashing in the water ? ’

‘ It’s the Sepik all right,’ I cried, ‘ but that was not a splashing sound you heard ; it was more like that of a boat bumping against stones in the shallows.’

‘ Never mind what it was, boys,’ Big Tassie roared. ‘ The river is in front of us. One more effort and we’ll break through to it. Come on, boys.’

Big Tassie sprang at the trellis-work of vegetation and spider-web entanglements which resisted our passage forward, stubbornly, and closed up again behind us, apparently, almost as we looked backwards, and we likewise resumed our bursting-through progress. Very likely we might have travelled easier along the interlaced tree branches overhead, but we were neither Pygmies nor monkeys, and the stinging-tree tendrils were extremely virulent in the upper regions.

At length we found ourselves stumbling through a mangrove swamp, in the warm, evil-smelling mud of which all sorts of reptiles and night-prowling creatures were unpleasantly active, and a minute or so later we suddenly emerged on the edge of the sullenly-flowing Sepik.

Almost immediately a man’s voice hailed us from mid-stream, and next moment a petrol launch beached itself beside us. Its occupants were a white man, dressed in the uniform of the New Guinean Dutch Police, and three stalwart natives in ordinary police garb.

‘ Come on board quickly,’ the white man said. ‘ I am very glad you are alive.’ He spoke in English with just the faintest trace of an accent.

‘ We are glad to be alive, ourselves,’ Mac laughed ; ‘ but what are the Dutch police wanting up here—— ? ’

‘ We have come for you. But I never expected to get you alive.’

‘ What are you talking about ? ’ demanded Big Tassie truculently. ‘ We have done nothing wrong, and surely it isn’t a crime even in the eyes of the Dutch to be living ? ’

‘ No,’ said the officer, ‘ but it is a wonder that you are ; you ought to be dead. What!—You do not know why ? Then I shall tell you : a head-hunter native from this part of the country fell into our hands down the river at the Dutch Police Station this afternoon, and from him I gathered that you British prospectors were in Wambarima, but were to be killed and probably

eaten to-night—or should I say this morning—when you walked into a trap the head-hunters and the Pygmy priests had all ready for you. Of course, the priests knew that you meant to try to escape during some important feast to-night by what you thought was a secret track known only to the priests themselves, and they had that track lined with visiting head-hunters, and the trees flanking it were filled with blow-pipe Pygmy warriors. I came up the river at once, but I never expected to find you alive. How did you escape?’

The man looked at us enquiringly and we looked at each other, at first blankly, then thoughtfully.

‘I suppose our escape is really due to the fact that we were dr——’ I began, but stopped abruptly, as a thought struck me.

‘It looks like as if Kalli had arranged for us to be trapped on that track he showed us!’ Sydney Charlie muttered, stricken with the same thought.

‘We forgot—that is—I mean—er—somehow, we didn’t travel here by the track which was all ready for us,’ Big Tassie said reflectively.

The Dutchman seemed as if about to ask more questions, but one of his natives whispered something to him, so laughingly he nodded his head instead and signed to us to get into the boat.

By breakfast-time we were safe in the Dutch Police Station and a week later we were down in Samarai, in British New Guinea.

## TIPS.

BY COLONEL THE HON. R. A. CROUCH.

THE greatest embarrassment of the modern traveller is the system of tipping.

In one of Charles Lever's stories is this outburst :

' A capital lesson in life may be learned from the few moments preceding one's departure from an inn. The surly waiter who was always " coming " when he was leaving the room, and never came, has now grown smiling and smirking. The landlord expresses a hope to see you again, while he watches your upthrown eyebrows at the exorbitancy of his bill. The boots attentively looks from your feet to your face, and back again. The housemaid passes and repasses a dozen times on her way nowhere ; with a look half saucy, half shy. The landlord's son, an abortion two feet high, becomes a kind of family remembrancer, sits on a high stool in the bar, and always detects something you have had which was not " put down on the bill "—two shillings for a cab, or a brandy and water. A curse upon them all. This polltax upon travellers is utter ruin ; and your bill, compared with its dependencies, is but Falstaff's pennyworth of bread, to all the score for sack.'

There is no traveller but reads this with appreciation, and a memory full of similar experiences.

The tipping system is a constant nuisance to anyone who occasionally or frequently has to live in other than his own home.

I had a strange experience in Moscow. It was before the Revolution ; and, at that time, perhaps even now, none of the London Travel Agencies had any representative in that Russian city, although I was able to buy Cook's hotel coupons, and was told they would be accepted. I was also assured that at the hotel to which they were directed, one of the conditions of their issue was that there should be an English-speaking chambermaid and waiter. This I found, upon arrival, to be the case, and not only so, but a polyglot Swiss was the proprietor of the hotel ; and he and his wife, and, in addition, the door porter, who spent his time in a little glassed-in room overlooking the courtyard, could speak our tongue. We spent seven days there, and, on the morning of our leaving, I received our bill. All the items were correct ; but

'supplement,' as the hotel-keeper called it, had sweets, extra two roubles, equal to nearly three shillings; and passports, fourteen roubles. I found on enquiry that the sweets charged were represented by a dish of jam which, on one morning, my companion had ordered; whilst the passports item was the cost of producing daily these documents to the local police. I paid these charges, and then the two chambermaids, and the waiter, ten roubles gratuity each, and the hall porter, who had been extremely obliging in directing us to places of interest at Moscow, where little English was spoken, and where otherwise we might have been lost, twenty roubles. This I thought not only sufficient but generous; and they all seemed satisfied and thankful. Our luggage was brought down to the hall, and the hotel railway 'bus, which was to take us to the station on our way to Vladivostock, rumbled into the yard.

At this stage the proprietor produced quite a surprise. He rang a very loud-sounding bell; and to my amazement, about twenty people ranged up in a serried group in the hall. I thought this was some pleasant Russian custom of God-speeding the parting guests. But as nothing was said, and no one attempted to shift our luggage to the 'bus, I asked the host what it meant. He pointed to the gathering.

'The gentleman will remember the servants.'

This was a shock. I said, 'The whole lot?'

'Yes. They are all to be paid.'

I had seen hardly any of them. As far as service to me was concerned, they were quite unknown. But I saw among the stolid-looking faces the waiter and the two chambermaids. So I said to them:

'Why, I have paid you!'

They bowed low, and slunk away.

'And these others? I have never seen them.'

'Quite so. But it is the custom.'

'Then I won't observe it. Get my luggage on the 'bus at once, please.'

He said, 'Your luggage cannot leave till you pay the servants.'

I said, 'Won't it?' I started carrying it out myself, and, as I was afraid the 'bus-driver might refuse to take us, waved a large wad of roubles in his face. He grinned so happily that I felt I was safe there.

As I further continued to get our luggage out, the hall porter came forward to help, but I refused his assistance; being so thoroughly angry that I felt I could have lifted a ton.

Apparently seeing that to wait was useless, the rest of the crowd faded away ; and we got into the 'bus, reached the station with much self-congratulation, and rewarded the driver handsomely.

I was later informed that I had overpaid for our individual attendance ; and that, if I had given a much smaller sum to the hotel-keeper, the whole staff would have been well satisfied. It was further pointed out to me, and properly, that not only those who are visible in an hotel are the ones who really do the service, and that the unseen servants are just as serviceable to the guest's comfort as those from whom he receives personal attention.

Quite different was an experience in Lucerne. I was visiting that beautiful Swiss city with a Travelling Agency, which agreed to discharge all gratuities to hotel servants if I stayed at an hotel on its list, but, if I selected an inn of a superior type, I must make my own arrangements. I wanted the best hotel. It means so much. So, on booking at this, I, wise through previous experiences, said, 'What about the staff gratuities ?' The booking clerk replied, 'If you agree at once to pay ten per cent. extra on your bill, that will be quite sufficient. And further, I guarantee that not only will none of the servants ask for more, but if you offered it, would refuse to accept it.' This was almost too wonderful to believe, but I acquiesced, and paid. The undertaking was faithfully kept ; so much so that, when a commissioner from the hotel who had been particularly obliging in seeing our baggage stored away on the train by which we left, and whom I felt was entitled to some trifle extra, was offered it, he waved his hand in a 'Get thou away, Satan' style, and refused it. It was superfluity of virtue. I found out from him that each member of the staff received a share of the ten per cent., proportionate to his wages.

In Eastern countries one expects constant demands for tips. Colombo becomes burdensome, with the nuisance of boys doing somersaults before you as you proceed along its streets ; or the constant offering of flowers, and the extended hand begging for presents. And some of the Egyptian railway officials are particularly offensive in their demands for baksheesh. They think that their office, not their services, requires personal remuneration from passengers. One conductor on the Port Said line came to me, who had never previously seen him throughout the journey, about ten minutes before our destination was reached, and extended his hand. I ignored it.

He said, 'We are nearly there, and you have given me nothing.'



I asked, 'What for?'

'I am the conductor.' This was said as if he had stated the obvious and no further reason was necessary.

I said, 'I haven't seen you before, and don't want you now.'

He thought hard for a minute.

'I kept the seats for you.'

As I had reserved places, I passed.

The Government employee, as he was, left me with a scowl, and proceeded to the next carriage. Perhaps they were more generous, and weakly yielded to official begging.

But on the station I met a fellow-passenger. He was still fuming.

'Did that lazy impudent conductor come and hold you up!' he asked.

'He tried to, but didn't succeed.'

'He did with me. There were ladies in the compartment, and I had to part up. I felt like a worm.'

'The worm should have turned. For other people's sake you should have stood up to the fellow.'

'Yes. I suppose so.'

I chaffed him. 'Nothing like new sensations. That's one of the pleasures of travel.'

He smiled weakly.

The trouble is by no means modern. We are accustomed to consider our own age as specially lying under this thralldom, but in the eighteenth century contemporary writers inform us that when people went out to dinner they were expected to tip their host's servants who sometimes stood in long rows in the hall waiting the customary *douceur*, on the departure of the guests.

Jane Austen, perhaps of all our women novelists the best reporter of the customs of her times, in one of her letters to an aunt, says:

'I am in great distress. I cannot determine whether I shall give Richie half a guinea or only five shillings when I go away. Counsel me, most amiable Miss Austen, and tell me.'

A writer in *The Times* in 1795 discusses the vexing subject in reference to hotels.

'If a man who has a horse, puts up at an inn, besides his usual bill, he must give at least one shilling to the waiter, sixpence each to the chambermaid, the ostler and the jackboot, making together

half a crown. If the traveller only puts up to have refreshment, besides paying for his horse's standing, he has to give away in the day another half-crown, which makes five shillings in the day to the servants.'

And this when money had three times its present value.

And, throughout the East, save in Constantinople, to be a traveller makes one the victim of constant importunities.

In London the practice has increased in recent years. One has always expected, in Parisian hairdressers' shops, to be called upon for a *pourboire*. Now it has extended to this side of the Channel. To leave a barber's shop without a tip to the assistant is regarded as the height of meanness, and quite an attack upon the rights of the working man.

I had a funny experience once in a Marseilles shop. This was long ago when I first began my travels, and had adopted the practice of buying something local in each place. At Marseilles I wanted to get a small statuette of a material which I had been informed was a speciality of that city. But I couldn't find a crockery shop, or remember the French word for a business of that nature.

I got shaved at a barber's, and he understood my French sufficiently well to carry on a small conversation. Then I tried him by asking him if he knew of a vendor of—— Here I paused, to point to a china slab in front of his mirror. He could not understand my want. Then, with a bright gleam of intelligence, he seized a bottle behind the slab; and, unless I had quickly risen, was about to rub into my hair something that looked like red dye, with which he had filled the palm of one hand. I was able to avoid this treatment; the colour of my hair suited me; but, after the usual *pourboire*, I found that I was expected to pay for the coloured liniment or whatever it was. I handed over the money without a murmur. It was my own fault to ask a hairdresser to teach me French. But I never got my statuette on that occasion.

The usual British traveller is ordinarily regarded as a good mark for extortion in continental countries. He is sure to be rich; and, of all things, he hates a scene. The average man is helpless as a sheep in the hands of the shearer.

But the Great British Female is quite different. The foreign shopkeepers and hotel-keepers tremble when they see her. The English lion is too weak to protest, but the English lioness has been through too many Summer Sales contests and Basement Bargain struggles to be stampeded into the practice of a customer

paying the wages of a servant, and he a foreigner, instead of his employer. She always wins, ignores the extended hand ; and, if there is any scene, teaches the foreigner he cannot browbeat an unprotected Englishwoman ; and departs triumphantly.

It is said that only a small proportion of women pay tips, wherever they are, and then only trivial ones. But that was before the recent institution of ladies' hairdressers, before whom the most adamant principles must fail.

At sea the tipping practice is almost universal. There one expects to pay, and pay well. Why, no one knows. The custom seems to have arisen at a time when stewards received very small wages ; and, alas to the man who has paid poorly, and travels later on the same ship. He is marked to neglect and all sorts of inconveniences. And some of the amounts so received are very large. I met the owner of a large business in one of the Devon towns, who told me that he had been able to set himself up so extensively by his having received, as assistant chief steward on a large Atlantic liner, over £1,400 for fifteen trips. And this, he said, was by no means exceptional.

Sometimes a Biter is bit. I had a friend who was invited to a place in Scotland ; and when there, went out with the shooting party. His luck was out, as the birds were shy. Returning to the hut he met the head keeper, and took out a sovereign to give him. It was in the days when gold coin was not the legend it now is, and was occasionally in circulation. Also it was in the good old time when the lowest note issued by the Bank was for five pounds. So when the keeper indignantly replied, ' You will excuse me, sir, but I never take less than paper,' the intending donor knew he was expected to part with a fiver or more. ' But,' he told me, ' I didn't. I put the sovereign in my pocket, and bought with it some of the best smokes I have ever had. And I did enjoy them. But, when I went out next day, I was placed in a position where I hardly saw a bird.'

Once a tip entered into the politics of an Australian state. A leading politician, upon his return to his country, was tendered a banquet by his friends ; and, at the dinner, by some mischance, gave the waiter twopence. There is very little tipping in Australia, but when given it is usually on a generous scale. The incident somehow got into the Press ; perhaps the Waiters' Union saw to that. At first regarded as a joke, it soon became quite a feature of an ensuing sudden election. The politician was pictured on the hoardings with two large pennies decorating his watch-chain ; he usually wore a monocle, but a largely distributed caricature showed

him with two, one on each eye, the rims of which showed they were pennies; whilst another election placard displayed his opponent handing out two golden sovereigns to the people, whilst he could only produce, according to his picture, the resultant benefit of two coppers to the voters. It may not have been cause and effect, but the man of the tuppenny tip lost the election. The Moral is—but as this is a political story there are no morals.

The way that women generally underpay their car-drivers is the standing joke of writers; and is used by Dickens in several incidents. The predatory taxi-driver, if he has a chance of a man or a woman fare, usually ignores the lady, as she rarely pays more than the exact recorded amount. 'And why should it not be so?' said a woman of whom I asked 'Why should we encourage drivers to dishonestly expect more than their legal due, and why should I act unfairly to myself or other women by virtual bribery? Women have less money to waste than men, and are not so weak. Men don't like paying extra, but they are afraid of being thought they don't.'

In some recent reminiscences by Miss Marie Tempest, she states:

'In these days when everybody has a car, it is difficult to realise I used to have to drive, after my performances, to my Hampstead home in a hansom. It must have taken half an hour, and there was always an unpleasant altercation with the driver to look forward to at the end. There were, of course, no meters on the hansoms. I remember the late John L. Shine who was a first-class amateur boxer, telling me he got a good deal of practice in offering to fight the driver for his fare. One night the driver got down slowly, and said, "Won't you take a look at me, Mr. Shine, before we scrap?" John, a little startled to find himself known, said, "How do you know my name?" "Well, you saw me last night at the National Sporting Club in the ten-round contest." John took a good look. The driver was the winner of a particularly gory fight at cruiser weights. John pulled out a sovereign, pressed it in the man's hand and said, "You're perfectly right about the fare. Entirely my mistake.'

Miss Tempest also refers to tipping the Custom Officials, a growing practice, nowadays, if one wants to escape heavy duties, where the vagaries or the personal inclinations of the checkers vary so greatly; but she adds that she never had much trouble at the docks, as her manager usually came to meet her, and possibly there was a little palm oil to make things easier.

But tipping is not confined to waiters, drivers, stewards, or any class. Three New Zealand friends had a surprise recently. They had a letter of introduction to a large factory in the North, and

were anxious to see a special development in machinery. Their visit was welcomed, and they felt they were being treated with special courtesy, as they were shown round by one of the directors of the firm. After their visit ended, one of the party said, 'I am in rather a quandary. Our guide when he shook hands seemed to expect we should pay him something. Can we? He has taken a lot of trouble.' It seemed hardly possible, but they found an excuse to return, and again saw their obliging conductor. On again shaking hands, one handed him a pound, which he smilingly accepted, and said, 'Thank you. I thought you had forgotten.'

There is no doubt but that travel for pleasure or leisure is greatly lessened by the tip system; and that, largely because the amount expected cannot be calculated in estimating one's expenditure. The Travel Agencies often advertise that their prices for a certain tour are inclusive of all gratuities; but that does not lessen the obsequious manner in which the servants rush to find the quite visible voyager's umbrella or stick, to unnecessarily brush his spotless clothes or hat, or generally to fumble around and paw him in the servile fashion which is particularly objectionable. And if he does not respond, he soon finds himself neglected. The boots which do not contain a coin are not properly cleaned. His soup is cold, and the meat served is tough, his telephone calls are undelivered, his mail mislaid, and the lift is not working when he wants to use it. He quickly senses the antagonistic atmosphere which surrounds him.

The remedy which would induce additional travel is that those hotels, restaurants and establishments where the employers expect their servants to receive tips should exhibit a straight-out notice of the amount or percentage required; and then the traveller or customer would know where he is. Under the present system, he sometimes is conscious that he has absurdly overpaid, or receives a look which makes him feel mean and uncomfortable. The amazing success of the small-lunch establishments, which cover our large towns in all parts, owe their popularity, not so much to their prices, which are sometimes more than those of competing businesses, as to the knowledge that their bills cover all demands, and that no gratuities are permitted.

It is not that the public objects to pay, but that it wants to know beforehand what it has to pay.

As things are now, one can appreciate the ancient story of the returned traveller, who, when asked if he had enjoyed his holiday and the change and rest, replied, 'The waiters had all my change, and the hotel-keepers the rest. I'll stay home after this.'

*Melbourne.*

## *YOU CAN HAVE YOUR HEAD.*

BY MONA GARDNER.

FORMOSA has always been a dark spot on tourist maps because tourists are so provokingly insistent about taking their heads with them when they finish their touring.

Now one can junket alone by train, by push-car, or by foot from one tip to the other of Formosa—can cross up through primeval camphor forests, follow footpaths along the central spine of the island, dip down into marble-walled valleys, pass through villages of head-hunters, chat with them about crops and the sty on baby's eye, buy cloth from their looms and depart—leisurely—with the same head one took to the island. That is, the same head outwardly, but inside it will have acquired strange and tangled notions.

Still it's hardly fair to hold the poor emaciated head-hunters accountable for this. If they leave your head intact you ought to be able to look after your ideas, even if they unaccountably turn into vague but insistent yearnings for the intangible all because you have looked at ridge after ridge of deliriously beautiful mountains which have come straight from the pages of a child's fairy-book.

Formosa is a place of paradoxes. It is a place where wanton orchids spread themselves over camphor stumps, where winter apples shake their blossoms over mango trees, where Chinese temples and Japanese shrines stand together to beguile the same itinerant gods, where the children of head-hunters sit at desks and learn an alphabet, and a place where the Chinese are clean.

However, because so few writers have wrapped Formosa in an adjectival cult, it remains one of the few places nowadays to which one can go and evolve one's own set of adjectives, thereby saving one's self the tragedy of discovering the place is quite different from the image which the superlatives of others has built up. Adopted notions are such fragile kites to send up in the realm of glamour.

Because no one has told us what to think when we look from the edge of a 4,000-foot marble cliff into rainbows, into corroded blue water where an island floats like an alert tortoise against the skyline, we can experiment with new thoughts and feelings.

## II.

As you push into the crooked harbour of Keelung between mountains tropically green you are struck by the incongruity of cement docks in such a setting. But there they are in neat and even rows with trim motor-ships, dishevelled tramps, sampans and junks all tied up alongside, whilst into them are being loaded pine-apples, bananas, sugar, tea, camphor, and an infinite variety of mysterious things in straw sacks.

There are only two reasons for being in Keelung—to get on or off a boat. Otherwise if you are there you are a suspicious character, and are apt to find yourself explaining—in a guilty manner—why you aren't a spy making drawings of harbour fortifications.

Consequently you allow yourself to be herded immediately into up-to-date railway coaches by smart, uniformed guards. With you there are people in Chinese denims, silk brocades, *kimono* and Osaka-cut sack suits. They are wearing every variety of foot-gear from wooden clogs and felt sandals to squeaking leather, and each is screaming at the top of his—but usually her—voice. No one is hurt and there isn't a fire, which is just as well perhaps, because neither would be noticed in this completely normal bedlam.

Such minor noises as the train whistle are entirely lost. Suddenly the wheels begin to move and the train chuffs out, leaving hordes milling about on the platform, more seemingly than have gotten on the train. However, they go on milling with an intentness which implies that catching a train is merely an incidental part to this business of coming to a station platform.

Old-timers will tell you that before the Japanese took over the railroad and smoothed out the gradient on this section, making the hour's trip from Keelung inland to Taihoku sometimes took half a day and often involved the passengers walking up the steeper grades while the engine made successive charges at the hill.

Taihoku is merely a place to leave one's larger pieces of luggage. Oh, it has a museum, a botanical garden, curio shops, serious-minded tea-tasters, and Chinese temples, but, except for the tea-tasters, all the other elements can be experienced so much more satisfactorily in their native settings. And yet, whether or not you are conscious of it at the time, you receive your first lesson in Japanese colonisation in Taihoku. The streets are wide, have spacious parkways and flowering trees along them, and many are paved. Neat European-

fronted shops spread wide porticos over the sidewalks. Street cleaners and watering carts are incessant and busy. Motor-'buses go in any direction and there are tennis courts galore, with here and there baseball fields, golf courses and swimming pools.

Chinese faces and Chinese pantaloons predominate in the streets, and yet there is none of the frantic swarming and the shrill animosity of the starved which is a part of streets in China. Business goes on with a leisurely air, and the people have an easy confidence, the sort of confidence that comes to a man when he knows that Nature will do half his work for him and that his taxes are not excessive.

### III.

A mackintosh and the ability to pronounce three or four Japanese words are the main essentials for the trip from Taihoku up into the savage territory in the Urai valley. Wonder, incredulity and contentment are acquired along the way. No more than half an hour from the capital motor-cars confess their inadequacy and come to a halt. From here on there is the choice between a footpath or a push-car. Next to being carried in a palanquin there is perhaps nothing so satisfying to the ego as a push-car.

About the size of a card-table, no more than a foot up from the ground and pushed by seemingly tireless coolies, these packing-box platforms are the mode of transport in Formosa the minute you get off the main line. If you go third class you share the platform with some vegetables, a very dead fish, two indignant ducks and one or more Chinese. Going first means that you ride in solitary splendour in a wicker chair and compare yourself—quite favourably—to all exploration caravans that have ever set out for an undiscovered continent. You move through space at a leisurely, satisfying pace, partake of the intimacies of the scene as on a walking trip, but need suffer none of the blistered aftermath.

It isn't the hushed expectant atmosphere of this remote valley, nor the spangled tree ferns, the scent of white ginger, the lush verdure on fantastic peaks or the enamelled blue of a quiet river, but the combination of them which fans incredulity into a blaze.

A few short years ago this was all a jungle—a festering malarial jungle where Chinese peddlars came to trade beads for camphor and sometimes returned, but often didn't. Now the hollows and gentler slopes are fields teeming with rice, millet, sweet potatoes and corn, while long serpentines of tea bushes march over the nearer hills in smug, orderly rows. Hydro-electric plants churn and



chump—like monsters in a forbidden paradise—to send electric current to remote mud-plastered huts.

All along the single trackway are convoys of cars loaded with logs, with tins of crude camphor and oil going down to the market. These meetings are apt to induce an extra heart-beat or two, for the coolies hop aboard during downhill stretches, blowing occasionally on a melancholy penny-whistle as the car careens about curves at breakneck pace. Since the only form of brakes is a decrepit stick wedged against one wheel, a sudden meeting means a mix-up, during which—if he hasn't broken several bones—the single occupant and his car lift themselves off the track until those more heavily laden pass by.

#### IV.

Along a footpath bisecting this car route I had my first encounter with a head-hunter. The police escort was some seventy-five yards below me when a small brown man swung down out of the undergrowth to the path immediately in front of me. Incredibly lithe, he stood there chilling my blood with the startled intensity of his gaze, for the most prominent item of his wearing apparel was an enormous chopping-knife. A moment longer he looked at me, then, placing a hand on each bare knee, he bowed long and low, saying in the tones of a vicar, 'And how are you to-day?'

He spoke in polite Japanese, and when I explained that my health—up to now—was of the best, he bowed again and then casually swung himself off into the undergrowth again.

Less than a mile farther on I met a woman of the same tribe, obviously so because of the tattoo markings on her forehead. She too reassured herself about my health, and in the same drawing-room manner enquired where I was going. However, she evinced no particular concern when I told her Urai was my destination, merely remarking that it would probably rain before I got there . . . and that yesterday had been a much nicer day for travelling. She was bent almost double carrying an enormous basket of sweet potatoes suspended by a band from her forehead, but she straightened up long enough to flash a disconcertingly appraising glance at the cut of my jacket and skirt.

Three and a half hours in the push-car brings one near the head of the long twisted valley where the village of Urai clings to precipitous slopes. Housing some three or four hundred of one Atayal tribe of aborigines, the village and its several streets are surprisingly

clean. Cement-lined wells with hand-pumps serve a dozen or so units of the mud-plastered duplex-type houses, and in the centre of all are the communal granaries where the harvests are stored and from which, each morning, each housewife is apportioned her day's supply of grain according to the needs of her family.

Hens squatting in dust-baths, yellow dogs sleeping in the sun, and the click and clack of hand-looms gave the whole an atmosphere of homely domesticity the day I arrived. The men were away from the village working in the fields, the children at school down at the government station across the river, so that there was only the gossiping-toned talk of the women as they dyed and wove hempen thread into scarlet and blue *pareos*.

Rescued from a nomadic existence which was necessitated by their incessant warfare with neighbouring tribes, this tribe for the first time in its remembered history is living in permanent dwellings. As a part of the administration's programme these people are being made into material for citizenship. With peace thoroughly established in the valley, the government marked out fields for each family and then built houses for them, combining in these houses recognised features and one or two unfamiliar innovations. The tribe, having accustomed itself to these innovations to the point where they are no longer innovations but everyday necessities, is now about to be boosted up on the next stage towards civilisation. *En masse* they will be brought farther down the valley to broader fields and to new houses a step or two up in the scale of human habitations.

Down the hill from the native village, on a narrow prong where the river forks, is the government station with the administrative offices, police barracks, district school and barter store separated from each other by terraced gardens. Here there are bougainvillea and rose trellises, hibiscus hedges, poinsettia borders and beds of snap-dragons all blooming in a sort of orderly profusion.

From the school there is the clamorous sing-song of lessons being studied out loud. This is quite the usual procedure in all Japanese schools, each child repeating his lesson over and over to himself in a loud voice, the idea being, perhaps, that if it is said aloud a sufficient number of times some part of the brain is apt to hear one of these repetitions and, therefore, remember it.

Buttoned up in khaki-drill suits and tied in *kimono*, the children of these aborigines learn arithmetic, reading, singing, writing, manual training and agriculture, their eyes, seemingly, complete

strangers at times to what their lips are saying. They learn of *Dai Nihon* (Great Japan) and of Japanese history, Japanese ideals and Japanese philosophy, but in order to assimilate this they are unlearning nothing.

Tribal taboos concerning theft, chastity and marriage, communal harvests, skill with the spring-net and in eluding cobras is the culture they have known, and it is upon this that they are grafting the shoots of a new culture. One thing only do they discard—the notion that a neighbour's head is a fair target for the knife. The neighbour's head is now distinctly the property of that neighbour and is not a potential ornament for some family mantelpiece.

## V.

South from Taihoku the road runs level, and just a bit self-consciously, across a vast savannah of sugar-cane. The dusty green of the cane blurs into the haze of distance so that the queer jutting mountains flung up along the skyline hang like a mirage in mid-air. And they are the more fantastic because they rise so sheerly from the flat plain, making a gigantic wall of rock climbing up into the sky as though to guard some fabulous kingdom there. Along the plain great groves of banana trees stand limply green under a tropical sun; frangipani and red acacias drench the roadway with their sultry scents, while high up on the peaks snow lies in smothering masses.

Taichu is less than half-way down the plain. Bristling smokestacks protrude from the forest of cane which surrounds this old Chinese city and from all of the stacks there is smoke. Formosa's sugar-mills run to full capacity all year long since they are faced with the security of the demand of Japan's 90,000,000 consumers. With the needs of Manchuria added to this, there is no question of over-production. Crops are bought and paid for while the cane stands in the fields. Not only are there these inducements to the farmer, but he is also given—free of charge—by the experimental station in his district hardy new cuttings with which to improve his crop, and along with these are sent monthly bulletins containing directions and suggestions on crop manipulations.

Taichu is a jumbled conglomeration of the new and the old—gaudily clothed firemen whirling and prancing with sticks in a back alley to frighten out fire demons while at the station are glib Chamber of Commerce clerks passing out pamphlets and directing travellers to the town's showplaces. Cutting diagonally through

the business section is an old canal, a drainage sewer really, fetid, thick with filth, and yet for miles along its wide sloping banks is to be found dense masses of bougainvillea, more gorgeous than in any park, flung out like gigantic silken banners of mottled purple. Townspeople crossing the canal are caught by its clamorous colour and pause on the stone bridge for a moment to gaze at it, and as they satisfy their souls they may, quite unconcernedly, drop a litter of banana skins and orange peelings into the water below. And it is obvious by their manner that the litter and stench of the canal detracts in no way from the glory of colour which their spirit imprisons for the moment.

Out at the edge of town in a sleepy overgrown park that was once temple ground a serious-minded official will rattle impressive keys and whisk you by cajoling hibiscus blossoms to show you a man-built cavern of bricks where water goes up, or comes down, to alarming levels, and sleek pumps carry it off to model homesteads. As he talks he is apparently oblivious that no more than a stone's throw away is the red roof of a very old Chinese temple and that from the slanting bell-tower comes a disquieting rhythm pounded out from a big skin drum.

Taichu's banana market must be awesome when empty, so vast is its area. But when the bananas are in it is distressingly like waking up to find yourself in the centre of a beehive. On all sides there are mounds—incredible mounds of green bananas in bunches, in fact so many bananas that just to look at them is to feel that you have been sitting at the dinner-table too long. The entire world seems to be there engaged in wrapping these mounds into huge papery leaves and then cramping them into baskets. There is the tweak and creak of wicker lacings, but from so many that the sound is more like that of a lumber mill. There is the conversation in steady screams of the workers, the clack of scales as human drays bring more and more green mounds, and now and then a queer-bodied spider detaches itself from the fruit and scuttles away apologetically, only to be thwacked at and cheered by the banana-packers as though he were a six-day bicycle champion.

## VI.

So quaint, with its toy engine and its high-wheeled carriages, is the train running back from Taichu to the mountains that it might have been cut from some early steel engraving and pasted on the landscape. This narrow-gauge line turns east across the

great plain to head directly into the mountains. Once there it groans and pants like a fat lady going upstairs as it noses its way into a valley which leads through and up over the first low range. Its terminus is a small town of red-brick shanties clustered about what amounts to being the civic centre—the banana market. Cockle-shells outline the station flower-beds where poinsettias and canna lilies blaze forth a defiance to the sun, while down the steps of the station are grouped sun-clad urchins sucking lustily on stumps of ripe sugar-cane.

The town's fleet of two taxicabs was drawn up in waiting and up the steps both drivers came bounding. Each expanded on the merits of his vehicle, and each warned vehemently against the dangers of the other. But like bandits of the old school, both demanded the same fabulous price for the hour's ride straight up a terrifying precipice to Dragon's Lake thousands of feet above.

It was an hour before sunset and, as the outskirts of town were the boundaries of savage territory, I climbed in. Just as we prepared to sweep off in a flourish of gravel, a spruce little Japanese man in formal black *kimono* bowed himself into the door of the car. He explained most politely that he was making the same trip to Dragon Lake . . . that he and his guest could stand my company for the sake of reducing expenses if I could stand theirs. I assured him I could.

His guest turned out to be a buxom lady of about thirty, billowing in silk *kimono* and with the unmistakable head-dress of a *geisha*. He preceded her into the car and she fluttered after with uhs and ahs into the seat between us. From his talk I was allowed to gather that he was a well-to-do merchant in one of the large cities of the plain come off for a week's holiday from his business and his family. That the lacquer-haired entertainer was openly accompanying him on his sightseeing tour seemed to be an item requiring neither explanation nor apology.

Up over mountains more savage than any human the motor road took us, the silken lady putting a handkerchief over her eyes in the Victorian manner as we swept around sheer curves. The merchant ignored her, picked his teeth with a silver pick, and asked longingly about Tokyo.

There was no danger about the road though. Wide, well banked, it hugs the inner ridges and is a comfortable ascent for the heavily loaded lorries which traverse it in convoys twice each day, and, as is the case of such roads, bears no testimony to the terrific

feat of engineering which must have been required to lay it out. It gives ready access to the great hydro-electric plant which has just been harnessed to one end of Dragon Lake, a plant which in time will supply the whole island with its electric current.

## VII.

Drawing up to the inn, there was the usual flourish of welcoming maid-servants, the innkeeper himself bowing low in the midst of them. And then as I stepped forth with the other two there was embarrassment; the chorus of welcomes was overspread with curiosity. Reservations, it seemed, had been made for the merchant and his guest, oh my yes, but . . . er . . . a . . . umh . . . nothing had been known about him coming with two companions—and one of those a foreigner, too.

As I disappeared into an upper hallway behind a diminutive maid I heard the innkeeper asking in asthmatic whispers whether or not there were to be separate apartments for me? The arrival of the police escort, which had joined us quite some way back on the road, evidently cleared up the mystery, for I was disassociated from the other party from then on.

The inn might have been one in the suburbs of Tokyo so faithfully were the appointments—even to coloured scrolls in alcoves, white-tiled baths and silken floor cushions—a duplicate of those of the capital. It stands high on a promontory which pushes inquisitively into the lake and its landscaped terraces shelve down to the water's edge. Like vari-coloured silk the water of the lake changes its colour with each puff of wind, trading misty blue for the fathomless blue of the exaggerated peaks high above it.

Early in the morning the police launch called for me, and while the mists were still huddling in the hollows we crossed the lake towards one of the savage villages. Along the way we passed several dug-out canoes, obviously hollowed from a single cedar log, whose occupants fished or smoked queer-shaped pipes intently and allowed us only short detached glances. Their hails were friendly enough, but their manner implied that fishing or smoking was a business.

Across the lake on a fan-shaped delta we found the village. Mud-plastered houses fronted in even formation on streets like a barracks. Sweet potatoes and millet were growing in cleared places near the lake and the path that led up to the houses was lined with fruit trees.

The whole village and all its dogs came down to meet us. They closed about our party as though to escort it up along the path. My anticipation had been heightened by overhearing the last policeman—there were four—instruct the boatman to keep the engine running. It must have been said because the engine was cantankerous, for I could see nothing in the friendly smiles and the good-natured badinage that went on between the officers and the natives to indicate that we might be making a hasty retreat from that shore.

The women had on their best jackets—short indigo and cerise affairs of coarse hempen thread. Some were beaded and some were embroidered in a design, but without variation in cut they all came just to the top of long loose indigo trousers.

Still more of the tribe were waiting for us in a sort of village green. Several old women sat on the ground smoking pipes made from the horns of water-buffalo. Over their scanty laps and into the dust babies were crawling. The young matrons and the débutante set were still adjusting their jackets and tightening a few pins in their intricate pompadours as they gathered about a large flat rock buried, except for its surface, in the ground.

Certain of these women were holding villainous-looking poles built on the lines of a battering ram of the Middle Ages. Varying from six to seven feet in length, both ends were alike as their bulk tapered towards the centre. They looked unwieldy, but I decided one tamp would mean one victim. However, instead of being weapons of destruction, they turned out to be musical instruments. Revolving about the stone the women tamped on it with their poles to beat out a haunting syncopated rhythm. Difference in tone was produced, I presume, by the varying length and thickness of each pole. Off at one side an old crone set the pace by slapping a dried gourd. Weird, minor toned, like something imagined, it came out of the centuries from a past infinitely more primitive than that which these natives are just leaving behind them.

### VIII.

From here one can go on to Tainan, that quaintly self-possessed town where the Dutch brought bricks and mortar three hundred years ago to build forts that are still standing; where the rebel Koxinga flared into an emperor overnight; where Confucian temples lift their tiles in supplication to the heavens; where the devout are summoned by chimes struck from thin slabs of marble;

and where hooded oxen tread at a mill in shanties to grind clay into face powder for women.

Or, you can turn farther up into the mountains, chuff for seven hours in a train that climbs 8,000 feet in that time and passes through seventy-seven tunnels. You will also see forest tunnels where orchids bloom from every stump and where the tenuous black rattan lays its 500-foot-long creepers across the top branches of giant camphor.

But no matter where you go, you will be just a little breathless. Your head will be telling you that here is sane colonisation where the lot of the farmer is happy and prosperous ; where all his children have schooling, vaccination, district nurses and doctors ; where the city dweller has light and air and ample recreation ; where roads are plentiful and man-built harbours protect fishing craft. Your body will remind you that even in the most remote spots the inns are well appointed and scrupulously clean, the hospitality soothing and friendliness instantaneous. But your spirit will leave all this behind. It will be over and away on some tormented skyline, quaking at the visions promised in some sunset of mist and gold, or dipping into velvet valleys where white birds hover like timid angels in a strange paradise.

Yes, you will be able to depart from the island with your head. But your spirit, caught high on some purple peak, will ever after be calling, calling to you.

*Tokyo.*



*WHO SITS FOR WARMTH.*

BY MARGARET ELIZABETH RHODES.

THEY turned to watch the sea breaking on the sand below them, and unconsciously fell silent. Far out, the gulls had found a shoal of fish, and made a white restless patch on the water where the stormy green turned to blue. On the hillside there was no sound; the sheep that had raised their heads to watch the man and the girl pass were grazing unheeding, where the sun between the leaves dappled them with light and shadow.

Suddenly the silence was snapped by the bark of a dog from the farm hidden in the trees; the sheep looked up, moving nearer together. The man struck a match, turning his back to the wind to light his pipe; and the girl watched him, her hands thrust deep into the pockets of her coat. I wish he would speak, she thought; I wish he would look at me and say something—anything to break this silence of falling leaves. ‘Won’t it light?’ she asked suddenly. ‘Strong wind. This is my last match now. That’s got it at last.’ They went on, until the sheep were small and shapeless, and the smoke curled up above the trees where the farm was partly visible.

Pacifism, psychology, stag-hunting . . . what are we talking about now? the girl wondered; I must listen, I must show that I am interested in what he is saying. ‘I very much doubt if the men in the last war really troubled to work out what it was all about or what they were dying for,’ his voice went on; ‘as I said before, I don’t suppose they weighed up the pros and cons before they decided to join up.’ No, they never weighed up the pros and cons; they didn’t know what they were dying for; I must agree with him, I must say something intelligent about war, she thought. But they must have known what they were dying for, for their wives and children, probably, or because it seemed the decent thing to do when their country was in a mess.

With a start she realised that his voice had trailed into silence. They had walked faster than she realised, and in a different direction from what they had intended. A little way from the path was an old hawthorn tree with a thick gnarled trunk and branches.

As if afraid of what she might see, the girl raised her eyes gradually. Outlined against the sky on the hilltop was a row of trees. The man watched her glance; then she knows why I couldn't finish my sentence, he thought; I never meant to walk this way again, I should have noticed that we had turned aside as we talked. I wish I knew what she was thinking.

When the girl turned he was looking away. 'Funny colour the sea goes out there where those heavy clouds are,' he said.

They passed the hawthorn tree, each pretending to the other that it was unnoticed. 'Remember . . .' the girl said quickly, and broke off. 'Yes, how you told me it was a wishing tree, and you were afraid to come here on Hallowe'en. Silly idea. But it was fun.' 'Oh, yes.' Yes, it was fun. What was fun? Yes, but I mustn't think about that now. Who sits for warmth before a burnt-out fire. Who sits for warmth . . . who was it wrote that? . . . a burnt-out fire.

Their smooth conversation had been shaken by this sudden intrusion of the past; they were uneasy, and each feverishly searched the sealed rooms of the mind for something to say, something that would restore the schooled calm of their world.

The man's pipe was out; he opened the match-box, and laughed nervously to find that he had forgotten he had used the last match, then put the pipe into his pocket and ground the box into the soft earth with his heel. They were nearly at the top of the hill now, and they could see the long grass shaded by the row of trees, and the boles on the trunks. 'I don't want to go to the top.' The girl's voice was very small and detached, and looking at her the man could not tell whether she were tired.

They turned back at once, the girl gazing ahead, not noticing his quick look at the trees just above them. Downhill the going was quicker, and they swung into long, easy strides. From time to time one or the other made some remark: on the first brown leaves swirling in eddies over the hill; on the clouds blowing from the sea; on the books they had been reading; until they were back in the sheltered lanes.

When they reached the village there was a stormy sunset out over the sea, tipping the waves with brightness. I will not look, thought the girl; nothing can hurt me any more, because I do not care. But I will not look now. She glanced sideways at the man, remembering that expression in his eyes, as stormy as the sunset; he felt her eyes upon him, and his mouth softened a

little, but he did not look at her. They stopped at last, and he held out his hand. Tell her you are glad, tell her you are glad, his thoughts prompted him. 'I am so glad that you could come,' he said; 'we needn't be afraid of each other now we know there's nothing left. Good-bye.' Nothing left; tell him you are glad. She took his hand; no, nothing left now. 'Good-bye.' She turned. He watched her walking away, and then went quickly up the road.

As he went into his house the first drops of rain fell; the fire was nearly out, and he threw on coal and watched the flames gradually leap up and make grasping shadows on the walls. Night drew in, and closed round him, and still he sat with his unlit pipe in his mouth. His dog put its paws on his knee and whined; he stroked it absentmindedly, but it knew that he was not comforted.

The girl watched the grey clouds sweeping across the sunset, until the rain was everywhere. Night crept up to the window and then came into her room; the darkness moved tentatively across the walls and enfolded her, flung across the bed, weeping for something which she would never understand.

The fire in the grate had burnt to grey ashes, and on the hilltop the row of trees were black against the sky.

*THE CHURCH IN THE FLOODS.*

HARDLY through wall or roof  
 Do the loudest storms intrude  
 Here, where toneless, subdued,  
 The voices drone on and on.  
 A waveless current of sound  
 Laps me around ;  
 As in water the whole place drowns  
 In the moan of the antiphon.

Outside in the wind  
 The trees creak and strain  
 In a tumult of rain.  
 The branches shudder and quiver ;  
 The rain, the rain, as a river,  
 Slashes and washes the pane,  
 And the twigs return again,  
 To rasp and patter, like fingers that seek in vain  
 Entrance from bluster of rain.

Round me the kneeling men  
 With their secret lives.  
 Round me the endless drone ;  
 While the singing gas-flame strives,  
 Like a gnat's thin voice, with the rise  
 And fall of the psalm, which dies  
 And lives again, on and on  
 In the murmured antiphon.

The men I do not know  
 Kneel close as thought or sleep ;  
 But their wordless minds are deep  
 Plunged into secrecy far below knowledge or thought ;  
 And each in his orbit caught  
 As a single star,  
 That is throned in dark and space, and burns forever afar.

Outside in the hopeless rain  
The lonely sunset dies ;  
Bole-deep in the floods the trees  
Toss and complain  
In the passage of gusts, that rise  
And fall again ;  
While November holds the land, that is sodden and sick with rain ;  
And what may hold the minds of the kneeling men  
They know, perchance, not I, as they rise again  
To enter the night, where the branches shudder and strain,  
Shudder and strain and quiver ;  
While the wind, the wind, as a river  
Sweeps roaring and eddying past in a pause of the rain.

ANTHONY FETTYPLACE.

*APOLLO SPEAKS.*

QUIET she stands. The wind sweeps down the valley,  
So that the pine trees sing, and great oaks quiver,  
And beeches laugh for joy to meet their lover :  
Only she stands untrembling, for she is holy.

Wind, pass lightly over her, touch her never !  
There is no music for you in those deathless branches,  
Only the toneless shiver of fear ; she flinches  
From you, as she flinched from me beside the river.

Not the most quick and urgent love has reached her  
—That startled nymph, who sped along the valley,  
Lovely in fear, veiled by a mist that slowly  
Parted and closed again as I approached her.

Longing to slake myself with her dim coolness,  
In mystery my brilliant life fulfilling,  
I leaped—oh, folly, passion unavailing,  
Binding my swift love to eternal stillness !

Now gentle grows my heat ; no ray shall scorch her.  
Her still, green life she draws from me, unknowing,  
Who cannot feel her shade, but yet am praying  
The finger of my love at last may touch her.

E. M. WALKER.

*AN ERRANT GENIUS.*

BY MURIEL KENT.

## I.

WHEN Mrs Oliphant set herself the task of writing a memoir of her kinsman Laurence Oliphant, soon after his death in 1888, she justly claimed for him a distinct and unique position in his generation, and rare natural gifts. Her sympathetic study shows a man who must still be reckoned among the outstanding figures of the nineteenth century; one whose extraordinary versatility and strange career make it rather surprising that, so far, he has not been chosen as the subject of a modern biography.

He sprang from an old Scots family, not specially distinguished in its male members through the centuries, but of good standing, and producing the Caroline Oliphant who, as Lady Nairne, wrote at least one immortal song. Laurence was born at Cape Town in 1829, where his father, Anthony Oliphant, was then Attorney-General and had married a daughter of Colonel Campbell of the 72nd Highlanders. Both parents had character, and strong religious convictions of the prevalent Evangelical type, to which they adhered as closely as their official position allowed, in spite of the social tastes that they also shared.

Laurence, as an only child, was the object of their special devotion, but the intensive early training of his home did not prevent him from becoming a lively, normal little boy; though his frank discussion of his faults in some of his childish letters suggests that self-scrutiny was already encouraged and practised. He was brought back to England by his mother, and sent to his first school near Salisbury; spending the holidays with her at Condie, the Oliphants' old home in Scotland, or with other relations.

When he was twelve years old, Lady Oliphant rejoined her husband who, meanwhile, had been appointed Chief-Justice in Ceylon. But the separation told so much on her health and her peace of mind that it was soon arranged for the boy to go out in the charge of an English tutor. The one chosen was young enough to share Laurence's delight in the long overland journey, which included being dug out of a snowdrift that blocked the

diligence at Chalons—and a voyage that, owing to the unseaworthy condition of the ship, lasted about three months. A fortunate accident gave them the unusual experience of a visit to Mocha, and an extremely civil reception by the Shereef.

Arrived at last in Ceylon, Laurence entered on 'a most cheerful, delightful life, between the gay little capital Colombo—where he knew everybody, and saw everything that occurred, and took his share in entertaining great officials, governors and such-like, on their way to and from India—and that home of health, Newera Ellia, among the hills.' There were two boy-neighbours to share his lessons, and Laurence, here as always, was his mother's chosen companion. Only eighteen years lay between them; and while he felt deep loyalty and admiration towards both his parents, his whole intercourse with them was of the warmest, most unreserved kind.

After a time, the Oliphants, with the idea of their boy being prepared in the ordinary way for the university, sent him back to a tutor in England. But just as Laurence, now seventeen, was about to go up to Cambridge, his father came home from Ceylon with two years' leave which he proposed to spend in continental travel with his wife. Laurence argued eloquently the great advantage, as a means of education, of accompanying them, and was so warmly supported by Lady Oliphant that he was allowed to exchange his studies in a Warwickshire vicarage for a winter in Paris, followed by a leisurely tour in Germany, Switzerland and Italy.

It was a decisive change of plans which proved to be a more direct preparation for the wandering life that lay before him than college could have given. Yet the irregularity of his education may well account for a lack of balance in his intellectual equipment afterwards, and for such a gap in his literary knowledge as that discovered by Sir Frederick Leveson Gower when he met Laurence Oliphant a few years later in Nepal:

'We found Laurence Oliphant an agreeable companion, and I struck up a friendship with him which lasted during his life. . . . He was not highly educated. During our Indian journey he asked me to lend him a book. Finding to my great surprise that he had never read a word of Shakespeare, I lent him my copy, and it was pleasant to see how thoroughly he enjoyed it. But he was naturally very clever.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Bygone Years*, 1905.

This first journey in Europe was not merely a long course of sightseeing, for young Oliphant took pains to learn 'the execrable *patois* of the peasants in the Italian valleys,' which he thought might be quite as useful to him as ancient Greek; and when the travellers alighted from their coach in some village or city, he was thrilled by the sense of revolutionary ardour that filled Italy in 1847. He threw himself, apparently without let or hindrance from his indulgent parents, into excited mobs, bent on tearing down and burning the Austrian arms from their Legation, or battering in the doors of the Propaganda. And he recalled, among those experiences, 'standing on the steps of St. Peter's while Pope Pio Nono gave his blessing to the volunteers that were leaving for Lombardy to fight against the Austrians, and seeing the tears roll down his cheeks.'

At the end of their tour, Laurence went back to Ceylon. When he was only nineteen he acted as his father's secretary, and was presently promoted to the work of a barrister; being engaged, he mentions, in twenty-three murder cases in the course of the next few years. This serious business was varied by plenty of society, and by his favourite sport of big-game hunting. It was a full and satisfying round for an able, high-spirited young man, but a greater adventure followed. Jung Bahadur, one of the first envoys sent from India to England, stayed in Ceylon on his return voyage, and his fine presence, Oriental magnificence, and seemingly enlightened views, made him a fascinating figure to Laurence.

When the Jung suggested that Laurence should go with him to Nepal, the invitation was eagerly accepted; and at the end of 1851 they set out together on the expedition which resulted in Oliphant's first book of travel sketches. At that time such a visit in the company of one who was 'an immense lion among the native princes,' and the powerful Prime Minister of a Rajah he had placed on the throne, offered an entirely new field to a young Englishman. Laurence Oliphant, with his quick observation and vivid style of writing, made effective use of all these fresh impressions; and the only flaw in his enjoyment was the gradual discovery that Jung Bahadur was not so completely Europeanised as he had appeared in Ceylon.

The Jung arranged shooting parties and elephant drives on a huge scale for his English guests; but, being 'a very jealous sportsman,' he reserved the best positions and most exciting chances for himself. Also, he was compelled to seek a release from his



promise to allow them to explore the country, on finding that it would be dangerous to his position to grant that unwonted privilege. In spite of this disappointment, Laurence's 'rapid and brilliant rush through India' added to his experience many an episode of risk or hunting skill, and a series of splendid scenes.

He was feasted lavishly—if not always palatably—by Indian rulers, and wherever he went his intelligence and charm made new friends. Again and again he was strongly attracted by the daughters of English officials; and he evidently stirred a considerable number of hearts in the succession of hospitable Anglo-Indian homes which were thrown open to him. His conquering air of ease and gaiety did not spring from superficiality; for even in those crowded days the habit of moral and spiritual analysis, fostered by his mother, was not altogether neglected. His long letters, carefully kept and numbered by her, contain not only lively accounts of his journeys, adventures and flirtations, but references to the conclusions he had reached on deeper matters.

He now recognised that his great weakness was 'flexibility of conscience.' His way of adapting himself instinctively to all kinds of people had 'degenerated into a selfish habit of being agreeable to them, simply to suit his own convenience.' He realised too that he could be firm enough when it was clearly to his interest; and that he had not even the excuse of being easily led by others wherewith to defend a tendency which he condemned in himself. 'In fact,' he wrote, 'the more I see of my own character, the more despicable it appears, a being so deeply hypocritical that I can hardly trust myself. . . .'

At the same time, Laurence was acute enough to know that introspection of this kind might result in insincerity and mislead his reader, so he finished his letter with a warning: 'It is honest as far as I know, *but don't believe in it implicitly.*' And, disarmingly, he attributes his knack of making himself popular to his mother's side of the house: tracing that ability to read character, which he hopes he has inherited, to the cool Scottish penetration of the Chief-Justice.

## II.

Soon after this Indian journey Laurence Oliphant went to England with the intention of qualifying more fully as a barrister than he could do in Ceylon. Lady Oliphant accompanied him, and they settled for a time at East Sheen, where they found many

congenial friends. One of these was the then famous Sir Henry Taylor, described by Laurence as 'the idol of the whole neighbourhood,' and particularly of the feminine part. Laurence read law with his friend Charles Pollock, played his part in London society, and discussed endless political and theological questions. It was natural that his generous nature should range him on the side of the masses, and lead him to undertake social and religious work among men and boys, whom he called his 'blackguards,' in the Westminster slums.

By the summer of 1852, however, Laurence wearied both of the long process of training for the English bar, and also of the incessant diversions of a London season. Accordingly he betook himself to Edinburgh, where he had the prospect of becoming a practising advocate much sooner; determining at the same time to keep his terms at the English bar, and the connections he had already made in London. He had only a month in which to prepare for the Civil Law examination required, but he succeeded in passing it; and was then admitted to the office of a relative, and Writer to the Signet, to gain experience.

For a time Laurence Oliphant thus divided his energies between Edinburgh and London; but the legal profession did not fill his impetuous, questioning mind. He was more concerned with the movement for reforming thieves which was being carried on under Lord Shaftesbury; urging its ultimate economy to the State against the arguments produced by what he called 'that strange obliquity of moral vision which makes a large portion of the community Tories.' He declared that a midnight meeting which he attended, with 'a whole room full of the worst characters in London,' yet already showing signs of transformation, was 'the most interesting thing he had ever seen.'

Meanwhile his first book, compiled chiefly from the diary kept in Nepal, had been published by John Murray, and was very well received. Desiring 'something to write about' again, he chose in a fortunate hour to spend his first vacation in a part of Europe quite off the ordinary routes. His original plan was to visit Russian Lapland for salmon fishing in its untried rivers; but on reaching St. Petersburg with his travelling companion, they found themselves too late for sport in northern waters, and accordingly decided to take an entirely different course. After a long journey by boat on the Volga, they drove some hundreds of miles across the steppe in a primitive carriage, drawn by teams of three horses, and often

at a gallop over mere tracks in the grass, finally arriving in the Crimea—

‘then an unknown and unexplored peninsula, and the mysterious city of Sebastopol, of which many legends, but no definite and clear information, had reached the world. It was known that Russia was there establishing an arsenal and headquarters of war, from which she would be able to descend upon Turkey and overawe Europe; that the entry was forbidden to strangers, and any attempt to make acquaintance with the place dangerous—all excellent reasons why the young travellers should push their way thither. . . .’<sup>1</sup>

It proved a fateful expedition for Laurence Oliphant, leading in the following year (1853) to the publication of their discoveries in a book which became of considerable importance when the English military authorities were called upon to organise a campaign in that unfamiliar country. A fourth edition of *Russian Shores of the Black Sea* was issued early in 1854, and Laurence Oliphant was hurriedly summoned to headquarters in order that he might place all his information before the generals.

It seemed possible that he might be made civil secretary to Lord Raglan, or be attached in some other capacity to the expeditionary force; and Oliphant, full of excitement, prepared himself for this wonderful chance by learning Turkish, and studying Eastern affairs in all their aspects. But while still living in a state of high expectation, and sought out as a contributor by Delane of *The Times*, the newly founded *Daily News*, and the editor of *Blackwood's Magazine*, another door was opened to Laurence Oliphant—in the West this time.

Lord Elgin invited him to go out to Washington as secretary to a special diplomatic mission, and Oliphant, counting on returning in time to take some part in the impending war, accepted the offer. Lord Elgin's object was to arrange a commercial treaty between the United States and Canada; a delicate piece of negotiation which needed the statesmanship of the chief and the collective tact of his staff to bring it to a successful end.

Oliphant's official duties did not hinder him from enjoying a continual rush of entertainments, and the forthcoming friendliness of the Washington young ladies. He had lost none of his talent for being pleasant, and had gained reputation as an author to

<sup>1</sup> *Laurence Oliphant*, by Margaret Oliphant. Two volumes. 1891. Blackwood's.

enhance his value. Before the treaty was duly signed, he learned a good deal of political and diplomatic wisdom; and when the mission passed on to Canada, he was appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs—thus becoming responsible for the Redskin tribes, though barely twenty-five at the time, and, as his biographer says, ‘with no experience, and only his native intelligence, shrewdness, and keen perception of human character to guide him.’ But he carried out the new work with his usual thoroughness, travelling into the backwoods, or by bark canoes on remote lakes and down swift rivers, to meet and address gatherings of Indians. And, with equal zest, on his return to Quebec he entered into the sleighing and other winter delights of the city; mentioning with some pride that he had introduced four new dances into its ballrooms.

### III.

Laurence Oliphant’s next venture was an ambitious and unofficial attempt to approach one of the Turkish leaders and persuade him to combine with the English in ‘making a diversion in the Caucasus,’ to draw off Russian activity to that region. He went out armed with an introduction to Lord Stratford, who showed him marked favour and took his visitor in his own yacht to the seat of war, but stopped short of authorising a mission to Schamyl. The scheme ended in Oliphant’s cruising about the Circassian coasts for three months, with some interludes of actual soldiering. On one occasion he was mistaken for an officer, owing to the regimental Turkish fez he was wearing, and was put in command of a working-party, with two companies of infantry and a couple of field-pieces, to make a battery on a pitch-dark night, close to the Russian guns. Daylight came without the loss of a single man, and the battery formed under his direction was entirely successful.

Though this expedition, as a whole, could only be considered a dashing, ineffectual affair, it gave Laurence Oliphant ample material for long letters to *The Times*, which brought him in ‘a lot of tin’; and when his homecoming drew near he assured his mother that, uncertain as his prospects were, he ‘felt more of a philosopher,’ and could at least write about uncommon places and experiences.

It had become impossible, however, for him, at the age of twenty-seven, to settle down to home life in London. Before long he was off to America again, and presently involved himself in a voyage to Nicaragua of a decidedly ‘filibustering’ kind. A

stroke of good luck saved him from any awkward consequences on this occasion; and in 1857 he accompanied Lord Elgin to China, once more in the capacity of private secretary, though not a recognised member of the diplomatic service. At Galle they heard the news of the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny; and on reaching Singapore, the troops assembled there, and destined to support the Chinese Mission, were sent instead to India. Eventually a smaller force was sent out from England to join Lord Elgin at Hong-Kong and they proceeded on the half-diplomatic, half-military expedition which gave Oliphant fresh opportunities for proving his courage and initiative. He took part in the storming of Tientsin and was present at the bombardment and swift capitulation of Canton. After a treaty had been signed with China, the mission visited Japan, which he found an 'enchanting' country.

Two years had passed before Oliphant returned to England, and on the homeward voyage he heard of his father's sudden death. He was still without a permanent appointment, and far too energetic to wait about for the favour of the Colonial or Foreign Office. He confessed that 'his natural man was intensely war-like,' and he could not resist plunging into the Italian turmoil of 1860. As an ardent revolutionary, he tried vainly to instil constitutional methods and sound tactics into Garibaldi, whom he found 'a first-rate guerilla chief, but in council a child.'

In the following year he was offered and accepted the post of First Secretary of Legation in Japan, and arrived at Yeddo in June. A few nights later the embassy was attacked by a band of armed robbers, and in an encounter with one of these Oliphant received severe wounds from a two-handed sword. As soon as he could travel, he was sent home to report on the unsatisfactory situation of the English Legation and recommend either its withdrawal or adequate measures to secure its prestige. He did not return to his post in Japan, apparently on his mother's account; but was, as usual, irresistibly drawn to the storm centres of Poland and Schleswig-Holstein in the course of the next two or three years.

When, in 1864, he determined to seek regular employment in England, his time was fully occupied as a notable figure in political, social and literary circles. It was at this period that he contributed to the pseudo-wisdom of *The Owl*—that mysterious little journal which set all fashionable London guessing about its origin. His novel, *Piccadilly*, appeared first as a serial in

*Blackwood's Magazine* (1865); the story being only a framework for his ironical observations on human nature, and the expression of his reforming zeal against those whom he called 'the wholly-worldly and the worldly-holy.' It was widely read and discussed at the time, and again when republished, with Richard Doyle's graceful illustrations, in 1870. But to-day the characters who people his Mayfair seem scarcely lifelike, and his attack on the outlook and the practices of Lady Broadhem, Mr. Wog, and their conventionally religious set, has more vehemence than subtlety.

## IV.

Laurence Oliphant was by inheritance and training a 'pilgrim soul.' All through his wanderings and adventures in three continents, he had turned back from every form of distraction to those interior questionings and metaphysical ideas that he so often confided to his mother. The tenets of her Evangelical creed had long ceased to shape his own; but the Christian faith was still the subject of supreme interest to him, and he acknowledged 'always having had a mania for finding out what people believe.' Perhaps it was because his youth, as we have seen, lacked something of mental discipline, that he had become temperamentally a free-lance—even in religion.

His contemporaries were completely puzzled when, in 1867, Laurence Oliphant abandoned his seat in Parliament, his position in society, and all his prospects of advancement, in order to join the little community founded by Thomas Lake Harris at Brocton in America. Viewed in his biographer's perspective, and considered in the light of her personal knowledge of Oliphant, it is clear that no sudden impulse moved him to the renunciation. For at least two or three years he and his mother had been studying the doctrine proclaimed by Harris in London halls or provincial chapels, and published in small ill-printed books. We have Mrs. Oliphant's evidence that these addresses contained remarkably fervent and lofty teaching. The Swedenborgian prophet and mystic certainly possessed magnetic powers; though he seemed to withdraw from, rather than to invite, adherents, his influence was overwhelming. At the same time, he did not 'demand of his converts that they should agree with him upon anything but the necessity of living a Christ-like life.'

His insistence on a total change of objective and the entire surrender of intellect and will to the claims of a new obedience,

were exactly what Laurence Oliphant had long been feeling after. It offered satisfaction of his own craving—which is the main motive of *Piccadilly*—for absolute correspondence between belief and deed. Mrs. Oliphant credits Harris with being, at this stage of his self-appointed mission, sincere ; and it is difficult to account otherwise for the dominance he obtained over minds that, like Laurence Oliphant's, were intensely active and independent. This extraordinary man, who was already regarded by the world at large as a fanatic or an impostor, was revered by his band of disciples as the medium of divine authority.

Every detail of their lives at Brocton was directed by Harris, and Oliphant, with the rest, was subjected to continual tests of endurance. From the first, he accepted the daily conditions of physical discomfort, hard manual work, and severe restrictions, as his probation for future service. But the closest relationships and affections came under the leader's tyranny ; and when Lady Oliphant also joined the community, her 'training' involved the agonising experience of being deprived of all intimate communication with her son. Even when Laurence was sent back to England in 1870, no word of farewell was spoken between them ; and she, who had hitherto lived upon his presence or his letters, was left in ignorance of his movements.

It was during this reappearance in London that Mrs. Oliphant met him, and found him unchanged.

'He came back more assured in his faith than ever—as serious, as humorous, as entertaining, as delightful a companion, . . . as when he had been one of the most popular men in London. . . . He stepped back out of the wilds into his place again, and became the courted of many circles, as if he had never missed a day.'

Harris's almost miraculous psychological intuition enabled him to take the measure of each member of the commonwealth. In Oliphant he had found a loyal follower with capacities for finer uses than those of a hewer of wood and drawer of water ; and he now bade him take up intellectual work again—though still under his guidance and at his disposal, wherever that work might be. The outbreak of the Franco-German War gave Laurence Oliphant an opening after his own heart. Delane engaged him as correspondent for *The Times*, and he was soon on his way to the South of France ; thereafter going from one battlefield to another, witnessing the horrors of war, risking his life in his efforts

to report faithfully from both fronts, and relieving the miseries of the French villagers when he had the chance.

At the close of the war, Oliphant became permanent correspondent to *The Times* in Paris, and his mother was allowed to return and make a home for him in the battered city. There he first met Alice le Strange, the beautiful and accomplished woman who realised all his longings and was in fullest sympathy with his religious ideals. But marriage was out of the question for Oliphant without the consent of the 'spiritual despot' at Brocton, which was withheld for some months, and only given when both lovers had made their submission to his ruling. Oliphant's money was already administered by Harris, being invested in community land, and Alice le Strange, in spite of her family's natural opposition, put the whole of her property into the leader's hands.

They were married in June, 1872; and a year later, at a summons from America, the home and work in Paris were given up and the Laurence Oliphants set out, with his mother, for the farm colony at Brocton. The young wife was eager to receive instruction from Harris, ready to lay aside all the ease and culture of her past life for the rough and simple lot of the community. Her ardent nature shrank from nothing that could help her to fulfil the high purpose set before these disciples—not the saving of their own souls, but the ultimate regeneration of mankind by 'a divinely directed effort of heroic spiritual discipline.'<sup>1</sup>

Harris's love of power, increasing with its exercise on nobler minds than his own, soon decreed sentence of separation on husband and wife, allowing only occasional meetings. Laurence was sent to the uncongenial commercial world in New York, with frequent business visits to England; and during his absence Alice was removed from Brocton to the new settlement founded by Harris in California, where he now had his headquarters. On one occasion Laurence stayed in the neighbourhood for some weeks, vainly seeking Harris's permission to see her.

Mrs. Oliphant, though she had long conversations with Laurence from time to time when he was in England, was unable to gather more than stray glimpses of the events that lay between his marriage and his final escape from Harris's domination. In 1881 Laurence joined Lady Oliphant, who had remained at Brocton and was in failing health. He tended her through her last illness, and Harris's lack of humanity at this time completed the long, painful

<sup>1</sup> *Piccadilly*, p. 259.



process by which their Prophet was proved false to their trust and to his own teaching.

To Alice, the shock of disillusionment came in a still crueller form ; but each had so thoroughly learned the way of gain through loss that even when allegiance to the leader was broken, their faith and devotion held fast to the cause. After their reunion in January, 1882, they remained some time in London while Laurence prepared his book, *Traits and Travesties*, for publication. Then they started together for the East. Oliphant had been concerned, two or three years earlier, with a Jewish colonisation scheme in Palestine, and he now went out as a trusted agent to administer the funds collected in England for the relief of the Jews who had been driven out from Rumania.

For months they were detained at Constantinople, where he did all in his power to overcome the Turkish Government's opposition to Jewish settlement in Asia. Towards the end of the year they moved on to Syria and made their home in the German-American community at Haifa ; watching over and helping such Jewish refugees as found their way to Palestine. Laurence was also occupied in writing numerous articles for the English press, and his novel, *Altiora Peto*. The summer months were passed in an encampment among the Druses of Mount Carmel ; and General Gordon, whose acquaintance Laurence Oliphant had made long before in China, spent a few days at Haifa between his surveying visits to Jerusalem and his departure for Europe (December, 1883). He and Laurence 'had many talks over Soudan matters' ; and they found much in common as they spoke of deep questions, and the spiritual revolution of which both had caught a vision. 'A man after my own heart'—so Laurence named him.

It was during these few years of freedom and happiness that the Laurence Oliphants gathered up their mystical theories in a book which they named *Sympneumata*, and regarded as their crowning work. It was intended 'for those who feel that the old religious landmarks have disappeared' ; and to some it seemed a new revelation of truth, though others saw nothing but a confused philosophy in their doctrines.

At the end of 1885 the Oliphants made a tour in Galilee, round Lake Tiberias, and at one of their camping sites Alice caught a form of malarial fever which developed fatally a fortnight later, at their mountain home. She died on January 2, 1886 ; leaving

him in 'an impenetrable gloom of desolation and despair'—until he was suddenly filled with the sense of her radiant influence. For the rest of his life he believed himself to be continually consoled, guided and inspired by her unseen presence. He returned to England in 1888; and, to the amazement of his friends, he married Rosamond Dale Owen in August; but his letters make it clear that her peculiar 'faculty of internal insight' caused him to choose her as a fellow-worker in his teaching mission, and as another medium of communication with his beloved.

Within a few days of their marriage he became seriously ill, and she nursed him devotedly through the following months. The Grant Duffs took him, a dying man, into their home at Twickenham; and as he lay there he was surrounded by friends of earlier days, to whom he showed all his old geniality and wit and attractiveness. But his mind had long moved less in the physical than the invisible world, and on December 23, 1888, his gallant spirit passed to immortal adventure.

### *DEAD LEAVES.*

Lost flotsam in the silver lake  
Of the moon, the dead leaves take  
Their wandering, aimless way; they float  
Into corners and huddle together.

The tide of the wind rises: they flee  
For shelter together under the lee  
Of the houses, into their sombre caverns,  
Nor rest in their harbours; they voyage for nothing—

Scattering, twisting,  
Rustling, drifting,  
Sighing, whispering—  
Summer is gone,  
Is gone,  
Is dead.

T. WESTON RAMSEY.

*BIG TOBY.*

BY EWEN K. PATTERSON.

SOME seventy miles nor'-east of Cooktown, an old almost-deserted gold-mining settlement, the most northerly town on the eastern coast of Australia, is a group of rocky islands that rise in lofty picturesqueness from the crystal-clear, calm waters, just inside the Great Barrier Reef—the world's largest coral wall that stretches for twelve hundred and sixty miles along the eastern coast of Queensland. All of the islands, which are uninhabited and little known to the outside world, are composed almost entirely of primeval granite; they are submerged peaks and ridges of mountain ranges that fringed the ancient coastline of Queensland, which now lies buried beneath the beautiful waters of the channel sheltered by the equally beautiful coral reefs of the Great Barrier.

The largest and most striking island in the group is Lizard Island, an imposing island of solid granite, some three miles long, and of an average width of about two miles, while in parts it rises to a height of nearly twelve hundred feet. From these heights may be viewed such a panorama of coral seas as exists nowhere else in the world. Away on the southern horizon commences a faint shimmering white line, which grows, broadens, and sweeps past the island a mile to the east as a spouting glistening turmoil; then it swings westward and fades away over the northern horizon as a dim silver thread. It is the surf upon the outer edge of the Great Barrier; the long white line signalling eternally the defeat of the mightiest of all oceans, whose opposite shore is South America. For untold ages the Pacific has hurled its inexhaustible forces upon that great wall built by the tiny coral polyps; for countless centuries the mighty ocean has ceaselessly smote that living wall with terrific hammer strokes; night and day its tremendous rollers have crashed down with resounding booms to surge across the coral in yeasty swirls to the calmness of the channel within.

From the summit of Lizard Island the waters of this channel take on different colours—varying from the dark blue of the deep waters to pale blue, light green, yellow and white—denoting the presence of underlying coral at different depths. In these waters an amazing number of species of coral flourish and grow with wonderful luxuriance.

Our visit to Lizard Island came about this way. Jeff and I were visiting Cooktown, and in the deserted main street we came across a weather-beaten monument—a fountain that had long since ceased to flow. From an old resident lounging on a near-by hotel verandah we got the story connected with that monument. It was erected in 1886 in memory of a former Cooktown school-teacher, who was the heroine of a terrible tragedy on Lizard Island. In 1880 the school-teacher married Captain Watson, a fisherman, and about twelve months later after a baby boy had been born, they went to live on Lizard Island, taking with them two Chinese manservants. These Chinamen were to act as helpers and guardians of Mrs. Watson during her husband's absence on fishing trips. All went well until September, 1881, when, during the absence of Captain Watson, a party of hostile natives from the mainland visited the island. They killed one Chinaman and wounded the other before they were driven off by Mrs. Watson with a rifle. The natives then congregated in the interior of the island, apparently waiting to make another attack at nightfall. Realising this, Mrs. Watson decided to leave the island. She had no boat, but managed to launch half an old ship's tank. She then bundled the wounded Chinaman into this, took her baby, and paddled away from the island with a sapling. Her intention was to make for Cooktown, but she never reached that port. The tank ran aground on another island, where Mrs. Watson and her baby and the Chinaman perished of thirst, their skeletons being found inside the tank six months later. Also in the tank was found a diary, kept by Mrs. Watson until she died, giving details of the tragedy.

After hearing this story, we asked a few questions about Lizard Island, and when told that it was a good fishing spot, we decided to visit it. We arranged with Martin, a trochus-shell fisherman, who said he would be passing the island in his schooner, to drop us there and pick us up on his way back to Cooktown a week later. We purchased fishing gear and hired camping equipment and a twelve-foot rowing-boat in Cooktown.

There is very little soil on Lizard Island, except in a central depression that crosses the island from south to north, and in which there is fresh water and a thick forest of pandanus trees. On the edge of this forest alongside the crumbling stone walls of the Watsons' old home, we erected our tents.

It was Captain James Cook who discovered and named Lizard Island; he landed there on Sunday morning, August 12, 1770, and explored the island, and in his journal he states that 'the only

land animals we saw here were lizards and these seemed to be pretty plentiful, which occasioned my naming the island Lizard Island.' But the lizards have apparently all disappeared, for we did not find a single one, although during our stay we walked over virtually every square inch of the island. But what we did find was a fisherman's paradise off the island.

Between Lizard Island and the Great Barrier the water is of remarkable clarity, it being possible to see to a depth of thirty feet or more. When we first rowed over these waters we were amazed at the great variety of fish-life there; there were fish of every conceivable colour, size and shape; there were big fish and little fish, square fish and round fish, fish of all colours of the rainbow, no two of them exactly alike. They presented a truly wonderful pageant with the sun flashing back from their shining livery as they darted hither and thither in instinctive dread of the shadow of the boat which had come to mar the peaceful scene. We visualised a wonderful fishing holiday with fish of different species for every meal, but we were to be sadly disappointed. The fish were easily caught, but we had an unexpected and unwelcome rival in Big Toby, as we later nicknamed him.

Big Toby arrived the first morning we started fishing. We had just thrown out our lines when he came prowling around a few yards from the boat—eighteen feet of repulsive tiger shark. The massive brute's wicked little eyes gleamed savagely when he caught us looking at him, and then, as if to show us what he would do to us if he got a chance, he rolled over in the water and opened his enormous mouth; and I confess that the sight of the cruel-looking jaws with their rows and rows of glistening, white, razor-edged teeth sent a shiver of horror through me.

'Ugly-looking brute,' said Jeff, with a little nervous laugh.

Ugly! He was ugly. He had an enormous broad flattened head, with his snout forming a great semicircle. On each side of his greyish-white body were the vertical, shadowy stripes, which give the tiger sharks their name; and clinging to his back and sides were at least a dozen sucking-fish.

This partnership between sucking-fish and sharks is one of the queerest of the sea. The fish, which often attain a length of about four feet, are so named because of a sucking-disk on top of their head, by means of which they can attach themselves to any foreign object, and thus be transported from place to place without any efforts on their part. They seem to prefer sharks. The latter obtain no apparent benefit by the partnership, but the suckers

undoubtedly do, for they get free food. Whenever a shark makes a 'kill' and commences to dine, the suckers immediately leave their host's body to feed, so to speak, on the crumbs from the strong man's table. Sharks will eat anything, living or dead, but I have never seen nor heard of them attacking sucking-fish. The clinging powers of the fish are really astonishing. It is almost impossible to dislodge a sucker from its hold by a direct pull. Its head has to be pushed forwards; this depresses the sucking-disk, and so destroys the vacuum by means of which it adheres.

Despite our efforts to frighten him away, Big Toby remained, patrolling up and down close to the boat. He appeared to be watching and waiting for something to happen, and we soon learned what that was. I caught the first fish, a big king-fish, but no sooner had I brought it to the surface than there was a sudden swirl in the water. Big Toby surged forward, opened his enormous jaws, and swallowed the fish, taking part of my line as well.

That happened each time we made a catch, and after an hour, during which we moved several times, hoping to leave Big Toby behind, we returned to the island in disgust, without a single fish to eat and with much of our valuable tackle lost.

The next day, we set out hoping that Big Toby would have departed for new pastures, but, we had rowed only a few yards, when he appeared cruising slowly along behind us. We realised that we were in for another bad day, and after we had fed the shark with several fish we returned to the island. The same thing happened the third day; but on this occasion, just as we were winding up our lines, Big Toby suddenly darted away towards the mainland at a terrific speed.

'What the devil has happened to him?' I began, when our attention was attracted by a sudden commotion in the water about 100 yards away.

As we watched, the glassy sea heaved gently, and we were amazed to see the great rounded black back of a humpback whale rise through it; a jet of smoky breath-mist shot high into the air, to spread out into a little drifting cloud, as a deep bass blast of rushing air came from the giant lungs.

For fully five minutes the whale rested with its sixty feet of bulk half in and half out of the water. Then the creature's broad tail-flukes stirred gently under the surface, and it dived out of sight in search of another mouthful of the tiny sea-creatures, which nourish the mighty bodies of these leviathans.

But as this whale disappeared fully a dozen others rose in the

surrounding water. They were all members of a 'school' of humpback whales, and were on their way southwards, returning leisurely from the long voyage which their kind makes each year from the icy Antarctic regions to bear their young in the calm, warm waters near to the Equator. The 'school' or 'gam' (as whalers term each travelling party) appeared to be made up of three or four old 'bull' whales, their numerous wives, and their calves.

One of the wives and her calf came to the surface within five yards of the boat. She was about fifty feet in length, and as she rose her twenty-foot-long baby charged towards her like a torpedo and buried its blunt nose in an enormous mound of udder, and commenced sucking like a mighty pump at teats as large as two kerosene-tins.

The fond mother lay on her side and caressed the feeding infant with flippers that were even larger than our boat. Then, when the baby had satisfied its hunger with the rich yellow milk, she gave it a playful slap with a flipper (a 'slap' that would have sunk our boat!), and dived gently with it to seek food for herself, and to instruct her rapidly growing child in the many ways of making an independent living.

After watching this amazing and peaceful scene, Jeff and I turned to prepare for our homeward journey. All of the whales had submerged and disappeared farther south, except two monsters, which seemed to be having a doze, resting half in and half out of the water, about a hundred yards from the boat.

Then suddenly Jeff shouted: 'Look! What's this coming?'

I gazed in the direction of his pointing finger, and there, cutting swiftly through the water, coming from the north and heading straight for the two resting whales, I saw a number of high triangular fins as black as polished ebony.

'They're "killers"! I shouted. 'It's good-bye to these humpbacks now.'

The new-comers were those fierce fighters of the deep seas, the terrible killer-whales. Possessing far greater strength than any other creatures in existence, more ferocious by nature than any animal, utterly fearless, alert and bold, they are undoubtedly the most indomitable and the most formidable creatures living. They are dwarfs in size when compared with all other whales, for they rarely grow to a greater length than thirty feet. They feed on all types of sea-creatures, including the other and larger species of whales.

The two humpbacks did not notice the oncoming 'killers' until

the murderous creatures were almost upon them, when they at once began to submerge; but the 'killers,' leaping forward at a terrific speed, hurled themselves upon the doomed pair. Four, eight, twelve, and even more 'killers' we counted. The glossy black-backed creatures, with their brilliantly white under-surface, attacked their quarry from all sides, and also from underneath.

The humpbacks lashed the water savagely with their great tail-flukes, churning it to foam, and reared themselves high out of the sea. We watched the terrible battle spell-bound, but when the humpbacks suddenly broke loose from their assailants, and dashed away, one heading towards the north, and the other straight for the boat, both followed by hordes of the murderous 'killers' I realised that we were in danger.

'We'll have to get back!' I yelled, but, in an instant, before we could even get the oars out, our little craft was surrounded by a leaping, snapping mass of 'killers,' while alongside heaved and rolled the mighty bulk of the humpback whale.

Fearing for our lives, we shouted and yelled and used the oars in an endeavour to scare the 'killers' away, but the blood-crazed creatures paid no heed.

Then the humpback in its eagerness to escape raised its mighty head high in the air, but the relentless 'killers' hung on, tearing with their terrible spike-like teeth great gashes in their victim's body, till the humpback fell back with a thunderous splash, throwing a wave of blood-stained foam into the boat and drenching us to the skin.

The boat tossed as if in a stormy sea, the water splashing over the gunwale. At any instant we expected the bottom or sides to be stove in, either by the struggling humpback or by the terrific lunges of the maddened 'killers,' some of which were easily three times as long as the boat.

Then suddenly the battle drifted a little astern. We hurriedly shipped our oars and commenced to row out of the danger zone; and we were not a second too soon, for as we moved away, the tortured humpback, with lightning quickness, leaped backwards into the air.

In a last mighty effort to escape, the monster lashed its great tail, which, had we not moved, would have smashed our craft to smithereens. But as the whale leaped, the 'killers' renewed their attack with greater vigour, and, in a few moments, with blood pouring from deep wounds all over its body and staining the sea for yards round, the humpback slowly sank beneath the surface, followed down to the depths by the insatiable 'killers.'



With the disappearance of the whales we decided not to return at once to the island, but to first pay a visit to the Great Barrier. We secured the boat to a pinnacle of coral jutting out into the channel, and then landed on the reef. It was low tide, and with every yard we progressed we grew more amazed at the sights that were unfolded to us. The reef was dotted with many lakelets, gorgeous with the ever-varying tints of budding coral—rose, red, sapphire and dull gold, and every shade between. The scene was also enlivened by a fantastic pageant of beautiful fish, peculiar crabs and starfish, and clumps of strange submarine flowers—such as were never known in the sun; weird growths whose stems were living moving tentacles.

For nearly two hours we wandered about the coral gardens, until the rising tide compelled us to turn back, and as we reached the boat Jeff said: 'It's just struck me that it must have been the appearance of the killer-whales that sent Big Toby away.'

'Probably that was it,' I said, 'and let's hope he keeps away for good.'

We then boarded the boat, and Jeff leaned over the side to rinse his hands. But, as he did so, there was a sudden swirl in the water as Big Toby shot up from below and snapped at Jeff's hands, his jaws missing the fingers by inches, while his great body struck the bottom of the boat, cracking a plank and rocking the craft dangerously.

Fearing that Big Toby might attempt to wreck the boat, we rowed madly towards the island. But the shark made no further attack; he accompanied us right back to the island, and remained prowling about just off the beach as we went up to the camp.

That night we decided not to waste any more time fishing, and we fell asleep wondering what we could do to fill in the time until Martin returned. We did not expect him to come for another two days, but at sunrise next morning we were awakened by a hail from the beach. It was Martin. His divers had been unable to locate any trochus shells farther north, so he had returned to try the waters in the vicinity of Lizard Island. We told him about the shark, and he mentioned that he had seen the monster when he had dropped anchor off the island. 'He came so close to the boat,' he said, 'that we put a shark line out. He took the bait all right and flattened out the big eight-inch steel hook as if it had been made of tin. He's a whopper, one of the biggest I've ever seen about here. Anyway, don't worry about him any more. What about coming out with me for the day?'

We jumped at the invitation, and a couple of hours later were on the schooner, heading for the reef with Big Toby, as usual, coming along behind.

The trochus shells, which Martin was gathering, form the nucleus of one of Australia's most important sea industries. The shell is technically termed *Trochus niloticus*; it is a large univalve mollusc—that is, a mollusc with a single valve instead of two like the oyster. The shell is conical-shaped, and is really a larger edition of the common 'top' shells of British shores. It is a handsome shell, being banded crimson and white, and when fully grown is about four inches high, and from four inches to five inches in diameter across the base. The shell is thick, but the coloured outer layer is extremely thin, the remainder of the shell being formed of nacreous material like the mother-o'-pearl which lines the shell of the pearl oyster. The inhabitant of the shell is a peculiar marine snail which feeds on the weeds of the sea-floor.

The animals live in great colonies—tens of thousands sometimes being found congregated together. The creatures are continually on the move, and they always travel in battalion formation. The shells find a ready market in Japan, where they are used in the manufacture of buttons, and the price received for good-quality shells ranges from £50 to £100 per ton. The dried and smoked snails are also in great demand in China, where the meat is used for soup-making.

The schooner was anchored a stone's throw from the Great Barrier, and Martin's two native divers left the vessel and proceeded a few hundred yards in a dinghy to dive for shells. I accompanied them for the purpose of watching them at their work. The natives were young happy-go-lucky Torres Strait Islanders. These Islanders are among the finest 'skin-divers'—that is, divers who use no diving-dress—in the world. Wearing only a pair of diving-glasses to protect their eyes, they can work for long periods in depths down to ten fathoms. It is remarkable how they can hold their breath so long, and when they do come up it is astonishing how easily they are breathing, without any sign of puffing or blowing.

Martin's divers, I noticed, were each wearing a peculiar-looking belt. These, I was told by the natives as we paddled away from the schooner, were special charms to ensure the wearers freedom from shark attacks. Each belt was made of shark-skin and was decorated with teeth from a shark caught by the wearer. The divers assured me that the charms had always safeguarded them.

I grinned at the idea of a ridiculous charm holding a monster

like Big Toby at bay. Then I looked round to see if the shark were coming, but he was nowhere in sight.

At the spot where the divers commenced work the depth was about seven fathoms, and on their first descent the natives located a colony of big trochus shells. The divers are paid according to the quantity of mature shell they obtain. It is illegal, under the Trochus Shell Act, for immature shell under two and a half inches in diameter to be marketed. This restriction has been imposed to allow the creatures to breed; scientists have discovered that the trochus breeds at least half a dozen times each season, and it is not until after the first season that the creature exceeds two and a half inches in diameter across the base.

Every few minutes the natives would come up with net bags around their necks full of shells. Emptying the shells into the dinghy they would dive again, and through the crystal-clear waters I could see them moving about the sea-floor with an odd grace. Now and again the water so distorted them that they looked for all the world like new ocean monsters.

The divers had just gone down on their twelfth descent when Big Toby came upon the scene. He cruised right up to the dinghy and then dived deep, and I almost froze where I sat as I saw him darting down towards the divers.

As I yelled to the schooner, Big Toby, travelling at terrific speed, was almost upon the divers, who, when they saw him coming, struck out madly for the surface. They side-slipped, twisted, and kicked their legs wildly. Big Toby missed them in his first rush, and, as he circled round and turned to attack again, the natives broke the surface of the water. I hauled one of them into the dinghy, but the other, Samai, was not so fortunate, for as Big Toby surged past the monster's terrible teeth tore a great piece of flesh out of the back of the native's right leg. With blood pouring from the ghastly wound, we lifted Samai into the dinghy and hurriedly rowed across to the schooner.

The nearest hospital, of course, was at Cooktown, so Martin doctored the native's leg from the first-aid outfit he always carried on board. But Samai worried very little over his wound; he was more upset over the fact that his charm had failed him. Almost in tears, he told us that this meant that it would be suicidal for him to do any more diving until he, unaided, had captured Big Toby.

The shark had followed the dinghy back to the schooner, and after treating Samai's leg, Martin got his rifle and wasted several bullets on the monster. We then returned to the island.

Neither Jeff nor I took Samai seriously when he said that he could not do any more diving until he had killed the shark. But Martin did. 'You don't know these niggers,' he said. 'They're as superstitious as pot. Samai will kill that shark, or he'll die in the attempt.'

And Samai did kill Big Toby; and his method of so doing was most remarkable. He used a simple trap, the most ingenious any of us had ever seen. As soon as we landed, the native, who promptly forgot all about his wounded leg, set to work to make the trap. He borrowed four empty four-gallon petrol and oil tins and a couple of hundred feet of stout rope from Martin. The tins had two holes in the top, but by plugging these with short pieces of wood and some old rag, Samai rendered the tins watertight. He then secured them by means of rope to a long sapling. Another lengthy piece of rope was tied to the middle of the sapling, the other end being fastened to the bow of the dinghy. Next Samai placed the affair in the water, and beneath the floating tins he hung a big rope noose, which was attached to the sapling. The noose was kept open by a thin stick. This completed the trap, and then Samai begged some meat from us. We had the remains of a leg of bacon and gave this to him, while Martin provided him with a lump of corned beef. Samai fixed the bacon to the end of a long stick, and, taking this and the corned beef, he boarded the dinghy, and solemnly paddled out alone, towing the trap, towards the schooner to do battle with Big Toby.

From the island we saw Samai fling the corned beef towards the shark. Big Toby greedily snapped up the offering and rushed forward for more. This was what Samai wanted.

As Big Toby came up to the dinghy Samai shoved the bacon, attached to the stick, under the water, and, using this as a bait, he cunningly drew Big Toby towards the floating trap, tempting the monster until, to secure the bait, Big Toby had to thrust his head through the open noose. Immediately this happened Samai jerked the rope attached to the dinghy and trap, and the rattle of the tins caused Big Toby to dart away in alarm. But as he moved the noose tightened around his neck and slipped behind his gills; and then a terrific battle commenced.

Big Toby struggled madly to break away, but the more he struggled the tighter the noose became. Had the noose been attached to any immovable object, the shark's terrific jerks would have snapped the rope, but the floating tins, acting as a buoy, prevented this and also stopped the shark from diving. Whenever

he attempted to dive he was drawn up again by the tins, combined with the careful pulling of the native. For nearly twenty minutes the battle raged, and then Big Toby's jaws were gradually forced open by the noose; the water poured down his throat until soon he was choked and drowned.

Samai then towed his catch back to the island. We measured Big Toby. He was exactly eighteen feet in length. We cut him open, and in his maw found the remains of one of his human victims in the form of several bones and part of a cotton singlet.

That night the natives gorged themselves on flesh from Big Toby's massive body, while Samai made for himself another charm—a new belt, utilising more than fifty of Big Toby's teeth.

Tiger sharks have an astonishing array of teeth; if man were as well equipped, dentists would never make a living. The tiger shark's jaws hold continuous bands of spare sets of teeth, so that when the first row is worn out the next automatically moves forward to take its place. Even if only a single tooth is damaged it is replaced immediately by the spare one waiting behind it. The teeth are well adapted for biting and tearing, and the sharks do not, as is generally believed, turn on their backs to bite; they simply snap straight ahead.

Our reason for searching Big Toby's maw was that on a previous occasion we had helped to land a twelve-foot-long tiger shark, which was carrying two bottles of beer in its stomach. The bottles had apparently been lost from a boat, but the contents tasted none the worse for their submarine detention. That shark's stomach also contained half a brick. We also met another fisherman who claimed to have once found a lady's handbag in a shark. The bag was in good condition and contained thirty shillings in notes and silver, but the owner could not be traced. These articles were doubtless swallowed by the sharks by accident, because experiments have definitely proved that sharks hunt solely by their sense of smell. One experiment was made with a shark in a huge tank of sea water. Parcels containing bits of iron, bricks, and other rubbish were thrown into the tank, but were ignored by the shark. But as soon as a similar parcel containing freshly-caught fish was dropped into the tank, the shark rushed forward and swallowed it. The experiment was repeated every day for a week, and the result was always the same.

*Queensland.*

*ABOUT DREAMS.*

BY C. E. LAWRENCE.

THERE are no frontiers to the Land of Dreams, that region of the supernatural, which, entered (as the ancients said) through gates of Horn and Ivory, reaches to heights beyond the stars and to depths lost among the humilities of death. All men are its serfs; subject to its whims that never can be laws. Genius alone has been able to override its subtle tyrannies and out of its uncertainties to build realities, sometimes with the beauty that endures.

‘In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree’ . . .

We may take it as true that Coleridge found his immortal fragment—perfect through its incompleteness—in the wanderings of his mind when sleeping or half-asleep after reading a book of Eastern travels; and that through the powers he possessed—when in his glowing youth the shimmerings of divinity were about him—he unforgettably wrote it down. The poem has the confidence of inspiration. Its syllables were not paled through any re-cast of thought, and in that impulse there was no hectic influence of laudanum habitually taken. Doubtless others gifted and proved in the arts have had such visitations, and sometimes, in the happy warmth of the begetting, have penned them worthily; but never has an inspiration, caught in sudden flight, been repeated with an equal impressiveness. Too often the light of morning has revealed the impulse as a mere conception of moonshine or influence of Mercutio’s ‘Mab,’ flying ‘athwart men’s noses as they lie asleep.’

‘Dreams are but interludes which fancy makes;  
When monarch reason sleeps, this mimic wakes.’

So sang John Dryden, and truly; but does his couplet express the whole truth? Probably not. One dare not be positive over that or over any phenomenon.

Psychologists have enquired, and reduced the study of Dreams from the earlier confusion of superstitions—wherein they were taken as predictions and so interpreted by Joseph to Pharaoh, or

as glimpses gained by the soul in its sleeptime wanderings—at least to the poor status of a half-science. Anything more than that apparently is impossible because of the incertitudes; for there is no standard whereby to measure their contents or the results. ‘All we can actually know of the total dream-life of mankind is as a single bucketful to the circum-ambient ocean,’ said William Archer, in his book on the subject.

The nearest approach to any certainty about them is that the dreams which come in sleep, or when the personality is veiled in drowsiness, are the fruits of what has been conveniently termed the subconscious mind; a realm in itself generally independent and never to be treated exactly or precisely assayed. It is out of the same condition that decisions after perplexed cogitations are sometimes attained. What had seemed beyond attainment in the weary daytime is settled through the unconscious workings of a night’s sleep. But no such efforts or dreams come in absolute slumber; for the brain is then denuded of blood, and without such flow the mind, the imagination, cannot be active. It is, however, evident that the sleeper may sometimes go a far distance towards the velvet sable of absolute slumber and still have enough subconscious energy for the mechanism of dreams to work in.

Within each of us there is, it seems, a second self with concepts, thoughts and language of his own; an independent person, not always a gentleman; for experience of myself has told me that inconsiderately in semi-consciousness I am capable of uncovering ill and ugly thoughts and sometimes find myself uttering, as I would not do if mentally wide-awake, words and phrases unspeakable (as they say) and not to be spoken—even mentally. Bishop Gore somewhere in his writings suggested that such thoughts and blurtings-out, coming naked from the submerged mind, were put there by evil spirits; the kind of temptations that flagellated the consciences of the anchorites of ancient days whose main occupation seems to have been the fevered and imperfect resistance of generally unattractive allurements. The same idea is illustrated in ‘Paradise Lost,’ where Satan is revealed in the guise of a toad, squatting beside the sleeping lovers, Adam and Eve, and fouling their minds with dreams of his own evil invention.

But no; without venturing into walks of spiritual possibilities that too often end in some slough of despond, it is sufficient to ascribe those mental wantonings to the mere natural man, whose forefathers were animal, primitive, savage. Even when they had

clothed themselves in the trappings of civilisation, as substantial as the woad in which Mr. Shaw's Britannus painted himself to be a final resource before losing his respectability, those ancestors of all of us remained, as we too remain, with a good deal of Father Brute securely set in our culture. One assurance gained from such revelations, gross as often they are, is that they do bring out aspects of the true person and nothing of such make-believe as is largely the window-stock of our social life.

Yet actual as is the creature lurking within the subconscious self, more often than not he is irresponsible, and through his antics, as disclosed in the dreams he releases, suggests that in the original composition of humanity there were something of the cunning of Mercury and the mischievousness of Puck, mingled with the blood and clay of the animal and the pure essence of the angels which, for all but the very few, seems to have been lost in the long, slow centuries of the development of mankind. Also, in those manifestations of the frank, and often humorous, brute within us that may be revealed in wilful or unguarded moments, all the tendencies of a living humanity are available, and not only such 'urges' or limited inhibitions as Freud preached when he ascribed our strengths and frailties to the untrammelled compulsions of sex.

So that with the mind free to wander, even to make holiday, is it strange that sometimes its adventurings are extensive and peculiar? It partly accounts for the visions of the saints which might have been wanton, being so natural, had they not been strengthened and purified by the rapt and mystical spirit which in the end often led them to the gladly suffered agonies of martyrdom. But the phenomena of such visions as the saints and prophets enjoyed are distinct from those of the half-sleep, and may be considered later.

It will be useful to detail examples, and the least unreliable evidence for ourselves comes from ourselves. It is of little value to know what Mr. Jones or his wife dreamt on Saturday night, quaint as those revelations might be, as there is no measuring the intensity of their dreams or of judging the quality or extent of the thought that was possibly the basis of those borderland eccentricities. In the same way, of course, the examples of dreams that I provide may not convince the reader, but we must start somewhere; so let us start with me.

The best dream in its imaginative qualities that ever I had was the only one for which there had been some sustained founda-



tion of forethought. I was in the serious early twenties and concerned, as were many at that time, over the possibilities of the survival of the human personality after bodily death. I was attending evening-classes and debates in the City of London and in the habit afterwards of walking to my lodging by St. Pancras through back streets that skirted on the way the northern side of Smithfield Market.

I dreamed one night that it was late of an evening and I was going the accustomed way homeward and approaching Cowcross Street, which runs from opposite the central entrance of the Meat Market, when I was seized by a company of French soldiers wearing *képis* and blue uniforms, but not the familiar red trousers of those almost prehistoric years. They were revolutionists and without a word spoken by them or by me I was placed against a wall to be shot. Their rifles were raised to the present—it was all very clear; I could see their two ranks—and they fired. A bullet entered my brain. As I fell the thought occurred with confidence and satisfaction, ‘So we *are* conscious after death.’ I also remember how disappointed I was on waking in the morning to discover that the experience had proved nothing after all!

Often I dream, and sometimes vividly; those night-adventures being frequently pleasantly original, or such is the impression they leave on me; but seldom can I recall such dreams on the following morning, though occasionally they recur in the daytime, weeks, possibly months, afterwards, when the details of a visionary episode are clearly recalled through some casual reminiscence or accident of passing experience. If in the process of that reappearance I attempt to force the next event of the dream, expecting this to happen or that, it never does so. Showing how wilful is the cave-man or the romanticist hidden in the subconsciousness, and who mocks our efforts at collaboration.

The following dreams of more than a customary significance are amongst those that I remember because of their frequent recurrence, or else through the vividness that fixed them on the tablets of my brain. I was always attracted by the revelations of Astronomy, though my pursuit of the uplifting science had to end when, having passed from the romance of it, I came to the mathematics. One night I dreamed of the corona, the ragged circle of flame emanating from the sun which in the photographs of a solar eclipse may appear as a fiery edging to the shadowed mass. Gradually as I gazed, for the ragged edge of the corona was exaggerated and

impossibly clear to my naked eyes, I saw that it was disappearing. The vigorous expenditure of gas and flames was growing less and less ; then the sun itself—even the very sun—began to dwindle ; until the whole great orb was vanished into darkness, and I found myself wondering, ‘ What *will* the newspapers say about this ? ’

I have, of course, though not in late years, had the falling dream, and of being saved by the branch of a tree when the shock of the descent had not awakened me. I have also dreamt of being able to fly for a dozen yards or so by simply flapping my forearms vigorously to and fro ; and so oft-repeated was this dream, even in recent years, that seriously I had to try to see if there were anything in it. Since that futile experiment the dream has not returned. Often I have found myself standing on a stage or platform, unclad or else clothed in unexpected and embarrassing pyjamas, while a crowded congregation silently stared. At other times I have gone on the stage to deliver an address to an audience hushed to attention, and only then discovered that I had no knowledge whatever, even of the subject of my expected discourse. Such humorous forms of pale nightmare are, I believe, common ; probably vagrant results of atavism generally shared by all of us. In my boarding-school days my dreams were less attractive. Often their theme was meals, for in the Dotheboys Hall that it was my ill-luck to attend, we scholars—bless the word !—were badly fed and nearly always hungry. I remember how disappointing it was to know that the simple solidities that we had eaten in dream, or were about to consume when aroused, were phantasmal, less actual even than the pretended courses of the Barmecide’s feast.

Another frequently recurrent dream, possibly derived from some mislaid memory of the Gothic romances of ‘ Monk ’ Lewis or of William Beckford, was of my wandering for hours through long stone passages and threading vast empty halls, unfurnished, undecorated, murky, gloomy. If there were windows they were shuttered and there was no relief from that weary pilgrimage in which sometimes I carried a drawn sword, very sharp but harmless to all including myself, until at last I emerged into a wood. Sometimes as a refuge from that wood I found myself in a large tomb unadorned and ugly, with a dead pyre covered with ashes at the centre. It was unpleasant and would suggest a morbidness of mind which I did not possess normally ; so that I prefer to believe those dismal dreams were due to want of ventilation in the dormitory wherein, with some thirty other boys, I was crowded.

Such visitations were forgotten in the daytime, but with the freedom of the night they often recurred and I re-traversed those monstrous corridors or found myself again a prisoner of the horrid room of death. Ugh ! But also in later years I have repeatedly dreamed of wandering through a beautiful and ever-unpeopled city, with wide shining thoroughfares, marble or ivory palaces and golden bridges spanning a wide and placid river that was sometimes opalescent, sometimes jade ; always the name of that city was Berlin, though no earthly city is like it. My visits there had no purpose, which, of course, is reason enough for entering any realm of fantasy.

So vivid sometimes is a dream that its circumstances blend with the experiences of life and after a time it is impossible to disentangle the sleep-imagined from the real. Possibly that is how his un-military Majesty, King George the Fourth, came to believe that he had commanded a division at the Battle of Waterloo. The idea opens boundless possibilities of reminiscences sincerely held over events which could not have occurred ; and all men are not liars, as the Psalmist said in his haste, but often are merely imperfect rememberers.

Indeed, it is easy for a dream to be more vivid than reality itself, and thereby to become a part of the texture of habitual thought as is shown by an instance which occurred to me when I was in the Army. Some weeks before joining-up, I had promised to give a black-and-white drawing to a man, and I dreamt that I had not done so but had put it away in a certain cupboard in London and forgotten it. So definite was the impression made by the dream that the thought of the neglected duty became permanent in my mind. I entirely forgot that it had been a dream, and almost the first thing I did when next on leave was to go to the cupboard to find the drawing—not there. I was so convinced that I had put it there that I puzzled over it, and at last asked my friend if he had received it. As he had. The drawing was framed, hung on his wall and I had given it to him ; but that fact was obliterated from my recollection. Now what had caused that trivial forgotten circumstance to revive so vividly in a dream that it compelled me to think and act as I had done ? There is, of course, no reasonable explanation of the circumstance. The sub-conscious mind is answerable to nobody ; and the cave-man, or poet, or imp, who lurks therein, prompting his irresponsibilities, is evidently also a picker-up of unconsidered trifles to be hoarded

until he can give them back to sleepers just a little in the wrong way.

Once that wizard, or sprite, Puck-like, played on me a trick that brought to me a touch of trouble. I had read for review a novel before going tired to bed, purposing to write about it in the freshness of the morning. That night, without remembering afterwards that I had done so, I must have dreamt of the novel, and in my review the next day I questioned the propriety of the writer's repeating a method of escape which he had used in an earlier book. When he saw my words in print he protested that he had done nothing of the kind; and in spite of my remembering the details so clearly, of course, I could only recognise and apologise for my fault. It was not until long afterwards that I saw how it must have happened. Which shows how easy it is for dreams to invade successfully the conditions of everyday and there mislead. On occasions while reading when tired, I have drowsed and in dream continued the tale or argument convincingly, as it seemed, although no printer had set the type that my mental eyes were following. These examples, culled from my own experience which, I suppose, is about the average, show how easily the mind can be tricked, and suggest that often such an influence may and must have affected remembrance and the faith in things. For surely I am not the only victim or blunderer in those innocent but dangerous ways!

The thought leads to one further. Out of such innocence may come guilt. Such impulses may instigate to crime as well as inspire a kindness—or a poem. The possibilities so aroused are endless and perhaps had better now be left to the more earnest psychologists.

Turning from the uncertain regions wherein our own private inhabitant, the little invisible gentleman—but no-gentleman; being a pirate, poet, miser and imp—so wantonly presides, we may cultivate for ourselves a sort of imaginative recreation out of the inconvenience of obstinate wakefulness. 'When lying awake with a dismal headache, And repose is tabooed by anxiety'—it probably is not of much use to try to manage the nightmare whose nervous back one is bound to. The proper way of escape from such affliction as is the humour of W. S. Gilbert's patter-song—when our world seems over-full of spites, stupidities and pricks—if we cannot get sleep through the anodyne that Nature provides and not through any kept in bottles or phials at a chemist's shop, is to encourage and to cultivate our dreams.

It is easily possible when lying awake, with the nerves not jaded but yet excited and with the mind at full wakeful stretch, to organise daydreams and thereby transform the tediousness of insomnia into amusement. In such hours I have gradually built and peopled a Parliament and held debates; have organised an army and fought battles, a counterpane Napoleon guiltless of my country's blood, and have carried on the campaigns of words and of arms as a serial night by night for months and years. It really is amusing to fashion those visionary adventures and worth while; for it is easy in the middle of a front-bench oration, uttered by my Right Honourable self to half-slumbering me, or in the thick of an elaborate military movement, to lapse into the desired sleep.

A point overlooked by amateur psychologists (as are most novelists) is that dreams generally are not topsy-turvy, but almost always are severely logical; though usually there is a kink in them somewhere which causes them to stray or tumble. For that reason it was appropriate for Sir James Barrie in *A Kiss for Cinderella* to give the King, when standing to speak from his throne, a strap to hang upon; for the mind in dream being severely logical and not enslaved to meagre consistencies, it was natural for that Cinderella's Cockney-Scottish susceptibilities to regard strap-hanging as a consequence of having to stand in an enclosed space with a crowd. Such detail of consequence inconsequent is the touch of genius in an invented dream. Yet in most novels wherein they appear, dreams are turned into sheer nonsense, wandering with a deliberately faked absurdity upside-down.

Clarence's dream in Shakespeare's *King Richard the Third*, terrible in its intensity and awful detail, strictly is not a dream at all, but the work of a powerful imagination and inspired passion of words describing horrors and wonders about and beyond the threshold of Death. Of a similar character are the fears of the realities of the grave which in *Measure for Measure* come from the lips of Claudio, terrified by the extreme closeness of his sharp doom. It is clear from those passages, as well as from the self-communings of Hamlet, and elsewhere, that Shakespeare was fascinated, while appalled, by the physical ugliness of death as well as by 'what dreams may come'; but with him it was the bitter truth based often upon man's treacheries and fears, and no dream; as, in a different atmosphere, Addison's essay, *A Vision of Human Life*, called by him the first of the Visions of Mirzah was not a vision but merely an allegory of human life fancifully elaborate.

On the other hand, Milton's sonnet on his Deceased Wife—'a poor sonnet' Dr. Johnson in his pom-pom manner miscalled it—was genuinely inspired and dreamlike. Its truth is manifest in its simplicity and feeling. She

'Came, vested all in white, pure as her mind :  
 Her face was veiled ; yet to my fancied sight  
 Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined  
 So clear, as in no face with more delight.  
 But, oh ! as to embrace me she inclined  
 I waked : she fled ; and day brought back my night.'

Similarly, Elia's Dream Children might well have been true children of dream ; for they came—begotten, born, bred—out of the loving broodings of his deprived and simple heart.

Visitations of terror, galloping nightmares shedding their trails of ghosts and melancholy, must also come, as they do ; their effects being tremendous, sweating and chilling, even when less than a poet's imagination has gone to their making ; but they are generally blessedly forgotten in the act of waking, lost probably because they had no substance even of the most gossamer dream-stuff to sustain them, and were produced by some sort of physical pressure, discordant, oppressive, of which we do not name indigestion as an example because it is a mean cause ; but do name fear, as often that is a real and abiding though hidden part of the emotions of many.

Greatest of the wonders that are wrought of the magic and immediacy of dreams, but this time they are wakeful, is that prime essential to genius—Inspiration. What are its origins ? Whence and how does it spring ? For it was not ; and yet it is. In a flash an idea is conceived which genius—or less than genius—in the heat of delight and the passion to create, expresses as poetry, a song, oratory, sculpture, a painting, music. Sometimes it comes from a momentary experience—from a book, a phrase, an incident of the street ; but always, whether its cause be visible, tangible, audible, or not, its cradle is surely the subconscious mind. And that is how it happens to enter the cousinship of dreams.

Inspiration and dreams, dreams and visions—all spring from the same impulse, which is also the stable of the nightmares that gallop in terror, often as formidable as that wrought by the dancing witch-sisters of the Cutty-sark who chased and took the tail of Tam o' Shanter's galloping mare, Maggie.

Visions are the greater dreams, more massive and supreme of exaltation, inspired with a purpose superb; it may be divine. Your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions, cried the Prophet Joel; but, from the many and diversified examples preserved in the literatures of the world, it looks rather as if the visions were the luminous outpourings of resounding prophetic age, while the dreams of the youths were rightly of their own personal achievements or of bright girls' eyes and ankles—and *they* are immortal too!

Yet can those visions, sublime and rare, of Time conquered at last, when worlds shall crash to catastrophe and the assembled saints rise out of chaos with trumpets blowing victory to the only Eternal, as John of Patmos proclaimed in his Book of Revelation—can they be of a substance similar to that of the dreams, trifles light as air, woven of gossamer and tricky thoughts in a half-sleep and sometimes born wantonly, as would appear, from the mysteries of the half-awake mind? Yes—and why not? As the universe has extremes, from the superlative to the least—the colossal, the mighty, the mite—infinity being linked though distantly with the infinitesimal; so may the love-dreams of a healthy boy or girl be of the very stuff from which the major prophets and the greater poets won, saw and sang their raptures—of denunciation, hope, beauty, condemnation, despair.

And we, too, in our transient humanity—as Prospero declared, are we indeed such stuff as dreams are made on? . . . But *are* we? Remembering the finiteness of all things earthly and the persistency of dreams, with the truth that they rarely come to their ends, can we be certain that we are as permanent even as they are? May not a dream be, after all, the supreme reality?

‘For if our dreams

Be not immortal, the soul is not. The soul  
Is but a congregation of high dreams.’

# LA TRIBUNE DE PARIS.

BY HERBERT A. WALTON.

THE Frenchman dearly loves controversy. He is endowed with a fertility of ideas, a genius for expressing them with wit, and a volubility of speech which impels him imperiously to expound them to the world. The national passion for argument is manifested, in Paris, in various debating coteries which find their most congenial field in Montparnasse. But these are mostly small, and are composed of groups which meet regularly in the same cafés. Their disputations are, generally, on artistic and literary subjects. As for politics, you may hear lively conversations between Deputies and journalists any night in a number of cafés of which both have long been habitués. There is in particular, within my own intimate acquaintance, a famous *brasserie* on the Rive Gauche. There the discussions are sustained animatedly till the stroke of 2 a.m. compels the disputants to quit the premises. And often the 'great argument about it and about' is continued for yet a while on the boulevard.

But, apart from these sectional assemblies, there is a great public debating society which cannot be neglected by the student of the intellectual life of Paris—the Club du Faubourg. With an attendance that frequently reaches two thousand, it must be the biggest regular debating society in the world. Any attempt to give some account of it can scarcely fail to prove it to be the most remarkable. It meets thrice weekly, save for a summer recess, in different quarters of the city in turn. It has a singularly good press, and the dates and subjects are announced in a number of the Paris newspapers. One may become a member by paying a subscription, or may attend any debate by simply paying at the door. It is essentially a public affair, and the remarkable hold that it sustains on Parisians is proved by the fact that the big halls in which it meets are almost always packed. When a particularly alluring or burning topic is down for discussion, the late-comer need not expect to be able to get in.

In many ways this Club du Faubourg must be unique—here the blessed word is surely permissible. Its fundamental basis is an absolute freedom of speech for the exposition of any doctrine, theory, or opinion. This utter impartiality has always fascinated me. One debate may be taken part in by a Jesuit and a Bolshevik,



and the rigid upholder of faith and dogma or the revolutionary is equally assured of a hearing. The views elaborated by a speaker on a political, social, religious or moral question may be abhorrent to many of the listeners, and now and again some adherent of the opposite camp, unable to contain himself as he hears one heterodox proposition after another hurled against his orthodoxy, jumps up in loud protest. But he is peremptorily ordered by the chairman, M. Léo Poldès, to resume his seat ; and the chairman has the support of the great audience which, however it may be divided on the topic of the moment, is one in insisting on an observance of the association's fundamental rule of absolute liberty. The number of men who possess the qualities requisite for the accepted control of such a society must be small. Léo Poldès, who founded the Faubourg, has the judicial mind to a super degree. The weapon with which, for the most part, he keeps the assembly in order is good humour ; but at a critical moment, when an ordinary man would be overwhelmed, he is capable of bringing a dictatorial sway to bear on a tumult engaged in by heated controversialists. On exceptional occasions there may be a few critical moments, but I have never known an instance of a sustained refusal to cede to the appeal for fair play all round. The angry interrupter will be given his chance in the subsequent general debate, for anyone who feels impelled to speak may then do so. The reader of the *Action Française*, whose blood has been boiling while listening to an adherent of *Humanité*, will be given just as fair a hearing.

One qualification is expected of a speaker who opens the debate and of those who—apart from the participants in the general discussion—have agreed to follow on immediately ; he or she must have some authority or reputation to hold forth on the subject—must know what he or she is talking about. And, generally speaking, none but recognised authorities in their particular domains dare to introduce a topic before so well-informed and so keenly critical an audience.

No organisation can command so diversified a host of orators as that to be found in the records of the Faubourg. From its platform leading statesmen expound their political views, and eminent writers—among them members of the *Académie Française*—and social experts expose highly controversial theories of life and conduct. An author speaks on the motives of his latest book ; a dramatist explains how he came to write a play that has created a public

furor; an *avocat* seeks to shed some light on the legal aspects of a current *cause célèbre*. The savant and the doctor discourse on some scientific theory or some medical question to which they have devoted the study of a lifetime. But the scope of the Faubourg is much wider than this; it is not uncommon for a man who has served a term of imprisonment for some political offence or for alleged participation in some financial scandal that obsessed public attention throughout its hearing in the Law Courts to justify himself from the rostrum of this Tribune Libre de Paris, as it is alternatively called. And it is a curious experience to listen, in this *milieu* of incomparable impartiality, to an impassioned personal defence by a man whose name is known all over the land by the association of his name with some terrible, mysterious crime.

Many an author hitherto unheard of has here had his name and his first book brought to public notice. The club holds out a helping hand to the writer in no half-hearted way; not only is he given an opportunity to expound, from the platform, the *raison d'être* of his work, but is permitted to have the book on the premises for sale to any listeners whose interest has been aroused to this testing degree. The club is chosen by many Senators and Deputies as the channel through which they may draw attention to matters of public importance that have no chance of adequate ventilation in either the Luxembourg or the Palais Bourbon.

Recollections of debates of outstanding interest crowd upon me. I have heard an eminent ecclesiastic argue the doctrines of Christianity against an Atheist, as a prelude to a discussion joined in by holders of many intervening types of belief or disbelief. I recall a meeting at which, after which numerous disputants had, on the one side advocated birth control, and, on the other, big families, there followed a debate between Royalists and Republicans. One of the most thrilling occasions in my memory is that in which film stars joined issue with writers in a debate on literature and the cinema.

Woman is plentifully represented in the membership, and numerous subjects of special feminine appeal figure in the programmes. A debate on some topical aspects of *la mode* had the collaboration of *couturières*, *modistes*, and *corsetières*, and was illustrated by mannequins. Our French friends, as is well known, have an amiable penchant for electing 'Queens'—'Mlle France,' 'Mlle Paris,' etc.—and I remember a meeting at which, after a

*littérateur* had delivered a witty and illuminating speech on the history of the practice, several beauties who had actually occupied ephemeral thrones gave outlines of their experiences. The question arose as to what becomes of these 'Royal' ladies. It transpired, in a general discussion to which a number of well-informed journalists contributed, that one or two demoiselles had realised the common dream of becoming film stars of moderate magnitude. But for the most part they had to return, after their brief, glorious hour of sovereignty, to their former occupations in dressmaking or millinery ateliers or in the office. One, the audience was amused to learn, was behind a pork butcher's counter, in which humble sphere she would, no doubt, while weighing sausages, be able to indulge in philosophic reflections on the passing glories of this funny world.

The freedom with which sex questions are treated would be staggering to any Anglo-Saxon unfamiliar with the French way of dealing candidly and naturally with matters connected with human nature. The women debaters—often well-known writers—seem to be less lacking in reserve than are the men; in this their speeches are a reflection of their books. Many an observation that would shock an English listener, if uttered in the equivalent phraseology of his own tongue, does not seem to be a breach of taste when used by a *spirituel* Frenchman or Frenchwoman. The fact reopens a perennial source of wonderment and a line of attempted explanation into which no suggestion of entering is made here. There is a difference between British humour and French wit—perhaps this single though vital fact implies the answer to the baffling problem. And, no matter what the subject, the audience of the Faubourg, like the orators, is everready, as is attested by the laughter with which the hall often shakes, to seize on its light aspects.

The thrice-a-week spectacle of audiences of up to two thousand furnishes a justification of the Faubourg's claim to be the most important debating tribune of the world. The appetite of the assembly is insatiable. A meeting, it must be understood, is not restricted to one subject; as a rule there are three or four distinct discussions, and the whole programme occupies three and a half or four hours. I have often sacrificed a meal in order to be present in good time. What higher tribute can one pay to the prodigious menu of information and entertainment provided by the Club du Faubourg?

*HAIR OF THE EARTH.*

BY ALAN GRIFF.

## I.

MR. TUKE was a neat little man. He wore a collar that was rather like a cuff, he was addicted to tweed suits, and in all weathers he suffered a waistcoat for the sake of its pockets which bore a massy gold chain and a timepiece. This timepiece ruled his life. It forced him to rise every morning at seven and struggle sleepily with pyjamas and socks and braces : it urged him to scrape the skin off his face in the most merciless way with a little metal contrivance, and to take up the collar that was rather like a cuff, and wedge his head on to it, pinching his neck and thrusting his chin high : in the interests of discipline it compelled him to drink dreadfully tasteless hot water, and to read cantankerous letters written during the fret and fume of the previous day ; and at the end of all this he was expected to smile at the maid, say ' Good morning ' in a tone of high-heartedness, and then sit to a breakfast of dead pig and the eggs of a hen, and coffee and marmalade and toast, served with a monotony which the passing of the years had made miraculous.

He never rebelled. The routine seemed to him natural and he was proud of his watch. Should any dispute about the time arise in the Treasurer's Office of which he was head, he would produce it, and quote the exact second, saying ' There's no getting away from this, you know. Just take a look at it. They don't *make* watches nowadays.' The clerks covertly winked and nodded, but Mr. Tuke's timepiece ruled the office as it ruled him. The banks were 'phoned precisely at ten, the various departments of the corporation received attention from him only at properly specified hours, such aldermen and councillors as blundered into his presence were treated with regularity and unfailing respect : the room was silent, the work proceeded with an all-but-audible tick.

In the evenings he returned to his home and his sister Joyce, who arranged her hair rather like the nest of a bird, and who disputed with the timepiece ultimate control of his days. She welcomed him with scorn, made him drink far more tea than was

good for him, drove him into the garden to weed or to dig. He was allowed no books, save the lives of Napoleon and Justinian and such exemplary monarchs, he drank no beer, and he only knew pretty women as so many fascinating terrors held at bay by the redoubtable figure of sister Joyce. The Richardsons had a daughter, but she never came to tea, whereas the Richardsons' son did and bored Mr. Tuke abominably with his rapid talk about the guts of aeroplanes, the joy of television, the need for Socialism, Vegetarianism, and Ido.

'A genius,' sister Joyce would say of young Richardson. 'I marvel you aren't *ashamed* to sit there so dumb.'

Mr. Tuke would nod his baldness and his neatness at her. 'We live on such different planes, my dear. I scarcely comprehend the things he seems to stand for. Now what is Ido?'

'John: you are a blockhead. Does human progress mean nothing to you?'

'Oh, yes. I think it ought to mean something, yet I never can tell what.'

'You never——'

'I'm sorry, my dear.'

'Really, John, there are times——'

But one afternoon, a Whit-Saturday when all the earth was drugged with sunshine, sister Joyce went away. The event had been discussed and now she gathered herself tremendously and departed for the week-end with urgent cries, much flapping of cheque-books, turning of timetables, and final terrific injunctions that were largely lost in the zoom of the starting taxi. For a moment Mr. Tuke stood, regarding the cloud of dust which had been his sister, then he strolled slowly back into the garden. It was a day from the sun's heart. Birds called softly over the fields, bees hummed, the lightest of winds caused flowers to sway. He sat in a deck-chair alone by the still house, for sister Joyce was too proper to leave the maid with him, and in delicious ease he rested his gaze upon the taut green of his front hedge. As a rule nothing could be seen beyond this hedge, because it was high, but after a while he was amused by a large velour hat which had settled on the level of it like some monstrous black moth. He was about to rise, to peer discreetly through the leaves, when the hat suddenly slid along the privet-tops. He gasped. Was the man a giant? he asked himself, and in immediate answer his front gate clicked and the owner of the hat appeared.

He was indeed tall, a slim dark tower of a man, with eyebrows like black feathers, and thin lips, and long expressive arms.

'I was told I should find you here,' he said, striding up the path and across the grass. 'This is one of your discount days.'

Mr. Tuke was flabbergasted. 'Discount days?'

'You sell your life, don't you? You sell it a day at a time to some piffling corporation and they've given you this as discount.'

'I'm afraid I don't know you, sir. I——'

'Of course you don't,' the dark man said. 'Of *course* you don't. How could you? You're tame.'

Mr. Tuke made an effort to believe his ears. 'Tame?' he echoed.

'Yes. One of the earth's cows. You don't even low. The old girl who's just gone—*she* milks you.'

It became manifest that vigour was required. Mr. Tuke got out of his chair. 'Who are you, sir?'

'Oh, you are quite wrong,' the visitor replied, waving a long arm. 'I am not a salesman.' He sat down in the vacated chair, looked about the garden in a disparaging way, and after a time turned his face up to the helpless Mr. Tuke. 'My name is Wrine,' he said, as though that justified everything. 'I am from Hampton Lucy and young Richardson asked me here to meet you. Really he ought to have come before——'

'He ought indeed!' Mr. Tuke exclaimed in sister Joyce's best manner. 'I certainly think it a trifle odd——'

'You would think anything odd outside your daily paper,' the dark man retorted. 'You are tame, as I said before.'

'Because I do my duty,' Mr. Tuke cried with sudden heat. 'It is put down as weakness to do one's duty these days.'

'And may these days not be right?'

That had not occurred to Mr. Tuke. 'The world's work must be done,' he fenced, caught in a pose.

'What is the world's work?'

Sister Joyce's brother found himself looking at fundamentals, and he hated them. He made faint sounds of distress, fumbled with his watch-chain.

'The life you lead is only illusion,' Wrine went on quietly at last. 'Have you ever listened to your footsteps as you walk? Have you heard them knocking gaily upon the road, and then realised that they came from nothing and will fade again to nothing? I advise you to try it.'

‘Why?’ the Treasurer’s Clerk queried. ‘Why should I try it?’

‘Because it will give you a sense of reality. Men and women listened to their own footsteps three, five, ten thousand years ago, thought them steadfast and enduring, the culmination of human history. They have faded again to nothing. Do we see the face of things, Mr. Tuke, or is this world but the back of another world?’

‘I do not know,’ Mr. Tuke seriously replied. ‘Nor, particularly, do I want to know.’

‘You are content with routine, then? You welcome illusion?’

Mr. Tuke said: ‘I am not concerned with the remote and the inhospitable. I wish to understand the world about me, the world I live in.’

Wrine stood up, swift as a released wire. ‘But would you *know* the world about you if you saw it?’ he cried.

‘Of course,’ Mr. Tuke answered, invincibly ordinary.

‘You think it all so thoroughly comfortable and desirable? You think that house looks on house, street joins on street, rail merges with rail from station to station until England is quite the biggest city on earth? You imagine every field is raked by man, every lake plumbed, every wood preserved, every single inch mapped; but you are wrong, Mr. Tuke, you are wrong, I say! Here by the very side of your house——’

There was a second click from the garden gate. Young Richardson entered, clad airily in boater and flannels, and he laughed when he saw Wrine’s attitude. ‘What-ho!’ he called with characteristic vulgarity. ‘Holding forth, *already*?’

Mr. Tuke ignored him. ‘Yes?’ he gasped, like a fish in the swift flash of taking the hook. ‘By the side of my house——’

Wrine seemed to grow taller, standing there between the rosebeds with the beauty of the summer day singing over him. ‘Beside the hedges of home is a world man never sees,’ he said. ‘Come with me.’

‘Whither?’

‘Come with me.’

Even Richardson paled, was reduced to the flicker of a smile, but he followed; and soon all three were walking into the lane and beyond the double hedges towards the Welcombe Woods. Everywhere the world was throbbing with growth, meadows aflame with buttercups and deep and rich with grass, horse-chestnuts sailing the landscape like lovely galleons flagged with flowers.

Summer was so young that the tips of hawthorn were still a delicate pink among the green, and the hedge bottoms were still a riot of cow parsley and flowering nettles and campion and rank grass and the starry stitchwort. Not a cloud was in the sky.

## II.

Mr. Tuke thought he had fallen asleep. Darkness was all about him, darkness and a peculiar odour as of unwashed clothes. He sat up, to find soft cloth at his feet ; he shouted, to hear his voice dull and muffled. For a time then he stared into the gloom which, unlike the darkest night on the surface of the earth, had no suggestion of shape, no horizon, and seemed to have no more limit than the blankness of infinite space. He did not feel afraid. The extremer forms of perplexity can drive all other emotions before them and his mind was literally saturated with surprise. He rose, began to grope forward, but after going a little way he stumbled against something huge and soft, gave an inarticulate cry and fell to the ground. The sound of his own voice reassured him.

‘ Who’s there ? ’ he cried.

The words died the moment they left his lips.

‘ Who’s there ? ’ he repeated, but there was no reply. ‘ Richardson ! ’ he called. ‘ Wrine ! Richardson ! ’

It was evident that he was alone.

By now his eyes had grown accustomed to the darkness, and he could make out looming folds of cloth wherever he moved.

‘ Is *anyone* there ? ’ Mr. Tuke shouted, and his voice rose to a delighted squeak, for suddenly he saw, far away at the end of a tunnel, like a tiny emerald ring, the daylight.

He rushed towards it, drinking the freshening air as drunkards drink their wine. He came into the sunshine.

And then he noticed an appalling thing. The Welcombe Woods had gone. The hedges had gone, the chestnuts had gone, the meadows gay with flowers and deep and rich with grass had gone. He was standing in a jungle of reeds and plants of the maddest diversity ! The very ground on which he stood had changed. In place of the sweet Whitsun verdure was a cracked uneven expanse of dried mud, and for miles about him swayed and rustled the reeds, green and tapering to a point, with distended veins running all down their sides, dry, hot, bewildering growths which had suddenly overwhelmed his world. Some of these reeds grew straight like thin knives, some twisted and overhung, others were broken



and interlaced among their fellows. Here they grew rank; there they were scattered and divided, two or three sheaths standing quite alone, surmounted by spikes and busbies and feathery seed pods.

Mr. Tuke's perplexity was too vast to give room for personal thoughts. He waxed demonstrative, addressed remarks to the wild vegetation, and it was whilst he stood thus foolishly gesticulating that wonder struck him again. He was naked. Every rag of his clothing had disappeared. With that he abandoned hope of ever explaining anything: he just gaped there, his brain going round and round, a whirlpool of surmise.

A smothered shout roused him. It was a sound like some human being yelling for help through thick curtains.

'Tuke!' it said, clearing. 'Ahoy there: Tuke!'

The shouter was Richardson, naked also, standing at the foot of an enormous mound of rag, running his fingers through his hair, peering to and fro.

'Where the devil are we?' he burst out.

'How can I know?' the Treasurer's Clerk countered.

The reply made Richardson frown. 'Surely,' he said, 'surely you can form a theory?'

But Mr. Tuke was helpless. 'Is this what Wrine promised us?' he cried. 'Are we wafted to another world?'

'Do talk sense,' the other said testily. 'Why should he want to take our clothes?'

'Has he taken our clothes? It seems to me that you are standing in front of yours and that I awoke in the middle of mine.'

'The whole earth,' Richardson said a moment later, 'the whole earth appears to have changed. And why shouldn't it? We men are but children of yesterday, knowing nothing of the laws of the universe. It is a new problem. This dried mud, those hideous bent weeds——'

He stopped. Mr. Tuke waited for him to continue, but he remained silent. The harsh black shadows, the splashes of sunshine which only emphasised the profundity of the shade, the green clumps, promiscuous and tangled, and the long frozen stillness, all combined to fill the naked men with dread. The jungle seemed alert, evil, seemed to watch them with sinister eyes, and abruptly a thin screeching broke out far in its matted depths . . . cri . . . cri . . . cri . . . cri . . . a tiny voice that called urgently until its shrilling was swallowed in a series of elephantine grunts.

‘What is it, Richardson?’ Mr. Tuke whispered in a voice that quavered despite his will. ‘What is it? What can it be?’

For an instant longer his friend paused; then he used an odd word.

‘Grass.’

‘Grass?’ Mr. Tuke cried.

‘Glorified grass,’ Richardson repeated.

‘What do you mean?’

‘Mean? Why, I mean what I say. We are standing in a jungle of grass and weeds and flowers.’

‘You mean things really *have* grown?’

‘I do. Tuke, we are the inhabitants of a world suffering from horrid hypertrophy. By some unknown means the entire vegetation of the earth has sprung to a hundred times its normal size.’

Another pause fell. The two men hung, trying to think it all out. Mr. Tuke’s eyes wandered into the thicket and a new thought came to him.

‘If,’ he began, ‘if the vegetation of the earth has grown like this, Richardson, why not the animal life? Moles as big as elephants, frogs bigger than bulls—’

Richardson spun round. ‘Ants the size of lions!’ he exclaimed. ‘Spiders as big as an armchair, grasshoppers—’

‘But *have* they grown?’ Mr. Tuke interrupted. ‘Organic stuff may grow, yet that doesn’t account for these mounds of rag. I believe—I believe these are our clothes and that we have shrunk in them, to awake in the darkness of our own trousers’ seats.’

‘Tuke, there are moments when I admire you,’ Richardson said, in his insufferable way. ‘Look at that!’ He pointed to what seemed a gigantic button-hole in the expanse of cloth above them. ‘And here,’ he cried, running to the left, ‘is the button.’

It was true. Hanging from the cloth Mr. Tuke saw a stupendous plate of bone, with four holes in its centre, connected by a sort of rope. He was about to clamber up to it when a loud buzzing stopped him. He looked at Richardson in consternation.

‘What’s that?’

‘Perhaps—’

‘Hide!’ Mr. Tuke yelled distractedly.

The jumbled roar grew louder, into a fearful volume of sound, shaking the reeds, rattling the very brains in Mr. Tuke’s head. He stared up; and presently there flew over the nodding grasses a terrible creature, its gauzy wings half-lost in speed, with immense

compound eyes like bunches of glittering grapes and a broad expressionless mouth which opened at sight of the two men. For the shadow of a second it hovered, a gaily-coloured thing of hairs and bristles, motionless over their heads.

‘A bumble!’ Richardson said in a broken voice. ‘My heart! My lungs! A tremendous bee!’ He stood swaying, and then ‘Wrine!’ he cried. ‘Wrine has altered our size. We are pygmies. We are no bigger than insects. We——’

He put a hand to his face, as though he had received a physical blow; Mr. Tuke thought he heard him weeping. But the bee, six times the size of an owl, regarded him steadily with its great compound eyes until a shout sent it darting upwards with incredible swiftness, circling and soaring, to be lost in the blue of the sky.

### III.

Knowledge unsealed Mr. Tuke’s ears. He became aware of other life in the jungle about him, eerie noises which broke out only to cease as oddly as they had begun, squeaks, scamperings, a low grunting, a sound like the whirl of a threshing machine heard at a great distance. At times, too, the reeds would quiver strangely, and there would be the thud of light and rapid feet.

‘Richardson,’ he said. ‘We must look about for men.’

‘Why? Why? Why?’ the other hopelessly monotoned. ‘We are useless, useless, tiny and helpless.’

‘You must pull yourself together, my good man,’ Mr. Tuke said. ‘It is now——’ His fingers fluttered watchwards and encountered nothing but the smooth skin of naked stomach. ‘What time do you think it is?’ he asked, suddenly panic-stricken.

‘Time, place, life, death—what do they matter here?’ Richardson glumly responded. ‘It is many hours to sunset.’

‘And what are we going to do with those hours?’

‘Find shelter, I suppose, find food.’

It was a grim consideration.

‘I thought that would puzzle you,’ Richardson sneered, reviving in the presence of another’s distress. ‘Why talk of looking for men, when your belly’s empty and you’re naked as Adam?’

‘I—I hadn’t come to that,’ Mr. Tuke said weakly.

‘Precisely. You hadn’t come to it. There lies the trouble with men of your type. What *has* your life come to?’

‘To this!’ John Tuke sharply returned. ‘I am reduced to

absurdity by you and your infernal friend, reduced to running naked about a meadow, hiding from a bee, crawling out of a leg of my own trousers to mystery and danger, perhaps to death. Could you not leave me in peace? Why did you send Wrine to plague me?’

Richardson made no answer, silenced by his intensity. The enigmatic grasses swayed, fragments of sound threaded the depths.

‘Who is Wrine?’ Mr. Tuke persisted. ‘Why has he this power?’

The other gave a dismissive shrug, then unexpectedly burst into wild excitement. ‘Look! Look! Look there—through the reeds!’

The Treasurer’s Clerk peered, and beheld a vast straw erection to the right of them. ‘What do you think it is?’

‘My hat!’

At first Mr. Tuke thought Richardson was merely using a vulgar phrase, then he saw that it was indeed his companion’s straw hat visible through a network of green

‘But—why all the excitement?’

‘Protection,’ was the only reply, and incontinently Richardson darted off towards it.

They went in silence across an open space where the sunshine was reflected on the caked mud dry and hot, so that in plunging into the deeps the shadow fell upon Mr. Tuke as a cool shock. He felt like a diver going into a dim pool. The inside of the matted arcade was full of quivering sunshine and shattered shadow: together they hinted the dizziness of the cinema and Mr. Tuke could scarcely distinguish his friend’s form for the pattern of light and shade that danced on him. The world of sister Joyce and treasury routine had vanished completely into this chiaroscuro. There was a disconcerting rustle which kept heads ever turning. The wind breathed above. Once they passed under a roofing of clover leaves, the daylight filtering down to them with a curious submarine quality, and at another point they had to make wide detours to avoid a bank of stinging-nettles. They found the hairy stalks of buttercups, with flowers poplar-high like yellow balloons hung against the blue; they saw box acre stem, towering in a maze of green, and daisies thick of stem and chubby of leaf; they came upon dandelion and meadow froth and the sweet miracle of trembling-grass, and Mr. Tuke’s lips opened in wonder to praise what he saw.

‘It is like the landscape of a dream,’ he said as they climbed up to the boater’s brim. ‘Who would guess the beauty, the changing lights and bewildering colours, the scents and sounds and dangers that lie about the roots of an ordinary meadow?’

Richardson had collected an armful of sharp pebbles and was chipping an entrance to the interior of the hat. ‘Sounds and dangers, yes!’ he answered. ‘Do you realise what will happen when night comes?’

The work went quicker then. Bit by bit they forced the straw back, until they had cut a little door which could push open and close again by its own tension. Within, the boater seemed like some vast and empty tent erected in anticipation of a flower show: Mr. Tuke could almost imagine the arrival of exhibitors with dahlias and chrysanthemums and matchless marrows, so heavy and autumnal was the air, so faintly did the light seep through wall and roof; but Richardson was a practical man, insisting that every inch be searched for insects, and organising a supply of stones as means of defence in the night-time. Afterwards he suggested that they should clamber to the crown to get a more general view of their world, for once the ribbon was passed ascent was made easy by the formation of the straw. From there they saw waving green and running shadow, flecked by the yellow and white of flower cups. The meadow, seen from its own level, was like the sea and produced the sounds of the sea in its multitudinous hum. A butterfly went loping past them in its queer uncertain flight, a great meaty insect, with a body of grey brown, long whip-like antennæ, and four expansive spotted wings, looking exactly as though one of the flowers had slipped its stem and gone dithering through the air in delight.

So absorbed was Mr. Tuke by the dance of these wings that for a while he paid no attention to a strange scratching sound which began on the hat below him. Richardson had fallen into a deep meditation, therefore the Treasurer’s Clerk felt quite alone when he beheld two thin black feelers come swaying silently over the edge of the straw. He was, for almost half a minute, petrified. He watched the antennæ grow steadily longer, gesticulating towards him in the most repulsive way; then he saw a broad shovel head set with compound eyes, a thorax of glossy black, and finally an abdominal chitin furrowed like a coat of black armour and pricked by a quantity of hairy holes through which the monster manifestly breathed. It was Richardson’s yell that roused him.

He had grown fascinated by the complication of the creature's mouth-piece, the long whiskery palps, the pincers, the foaming mandibles; he had stupidly begun to count the joints of the legs as they clawed over the edge, and the shout went through him like a sword. The shout went through the invader also, for it froze to an inhuman stillness. Another pair of antennæ swayed up beside it, yet another shovel head, and both remained still as Mr. Tuke raced wildly over the crown and vanished down the farther side.

Evening was coming on. The slanting rays of the sun caught a reed here and a leaf there but brought dusk to the tangles of the meadow. In the hat it was already deep dark, and Mr. Tuke became aware of Richardson whispering close beside him.

'They are ground beetles,' he was saying, 'some sort of butchering bug attracted by our flesh. If we keep——'

'Nonsense!' Mr. Tuke cried, quite loudly. 'I am citizen of a plain and ordinary world, Richardson: I entirely reject the idea that beetles can be a mortal danger to me.'

'Sh-sh,' the other protested. 'You must speak very low.'

But Mr. Tuke was outside the situation, his mind curiously misted over, unable to take part in such mimic terrors. He regarded the moving darkness of his companion's shape with something in the nature of a grin. 'The joke is too big for you,' he said: 'two men hiding in a hat from a handful of beetles, planning to keep terribly silent, alert and afraid in the dark with someone's wireless blaring maybe not fifty yards away! Why don't you laugh, man?'

'I am too young to laugh at death,' Richardson answered, and tiptoed to the side, listening. 'Can you guess what this pause means?'

'I can see that it means anything, everything, to you.'

Richardson came back, horror in his voice. 'They are waiting outside, gathering in the jungle before rushing upon us in mass.'

'I simply cannot bring myself to believe it,' Mr. Tuke obstinately said again, but at that moment a swift pattering of feet broke out on the roof above him.

He went to the aperture and looked out. A haze was rising among the grass, soft tentacles embracing every reed, soft clouds washing their points to a blur. The beetles were moving uneasily to and fro, dim squat shapes with large heads and spindle legs, making a low stridulation, and obviously watching the efforts

of their comrades on the roof. The wind had fallen. The reeds stood stiff and still and the whole jungle seemed to hold its breath.

‘Do you understand now?’ Richardson asked, pressing his fears as a child would press.

‘You might try throwing stones’

‘Stones!’ Richardson almost vomited the word. ‘Of what use are stones against armour like that?’

Sister Joyce’s brother turned away. ‘I don’t know. I don’t care. This is nothing but a dream and I refuse to be involved. Mine is a world of considered tasks and balanced acts. If a situation arises——’

He got no further, for a sudden outburst of stridulation, harsh and high, drowned his voice. In a second the beetles had surrounded the hat and were beating upon its sides, scratching the soil away from its brim, running all over it with tapping inhuman feet. One monster, bolder than the rest, thrust its head through the little doorway, but Richardson cried loudly and beat between its eyes with a stone until it fled. The noises became shriller. Mr. Tuke had to put his fingers in his ears to shut them out, and then, in the darkness, he was both blind and deaf. He was too astonished by strangeness, too full indeed of strangeness, to accept the truth.

When he uncovered his ears the din was over. He listened intently and his first impression was that the beetles had fled; but he heard a faint ejaculation from Richardson and immediately he grew conscious of another, a queer dragging sound.

‘Caterpillars!’ his companion was saying in a tone of flattish wonder. ‘Dozens and dozens of ’em! What on earth can they be doing, all in line like that?’

Dimly visible in the last of the light an endless chain of caterpillars had come crawling by the hat, each grub with its head buried in the tail of its front neighbour, each following the leader, all stopping and moving like some pulley-drawn rope. Mr. Tuke saw that they were connected by a silken thread, so that should one fall out of the solemn procession those behind could hasten forward to fill the gap. They must have been utterly brainless, or involved in some sexual orgy, for they drove clean at the beetles who had fallen away from the boater to meet them. Nor did they make any effort to fight. Some of the poor things attempted to crawl away from the carnage, others to bury themselves from sight in the loose soil, but not one escaped.

The haze thickened and passed. Night fell, and presently there was a great display of stars scattered over the heavens. The grasses stood, a formidable wall of blackness against the blue of the sky, with a few spearlike reeds silhouetted sharp and clear. The voice of the nightgrass was very different from that of the day. In the sunshine it was a low throbbing, which filled the silence rather than destroyed it, but now sound and silence blew in gusts. Weird screechings would break out here and there, then quietness would fall back like a sigh. Once the two men were startled by a hoarse thick cry quite close at hand and by a whirring of leathery wings. They looked up apprehensively, caught a transient glimpse of something huge and swift blundering across the star-spangled sky. It had a wing-span of almost thirty feet and a bulging head showing animal jaws. Twice it circled about the hat, agitating the reeds in the current of its flight; then it cried again, and so passed with a strange whirring and wailing away into the night.

## IV.

‘Holloa, Tuke! Holloa, Richardson!’

The voice came with the sunrise and Mr. Tuke rubbed his eyes. For long he had sat in the little doorway, watching night fade and daylight grow, and now came this calling far off in the grasses!

‘I say,’ he began timorously. ‘I thought I heard a voice. Come and listen. I thought I heard our names.’

Richardson approached, still sleepy, and sniffed through the aperture. ‘My thighs!’ he grumbled. ‘Isn’t it cold?’

Enormous beads of dew glistened on every reed, the faint breeze causing them to shiver and dart their radiance into the softened shadows; but they revealed no possible source of words. Mr. Tuke stepped into the cool air, rashly ventured among the wet grass, but he drew back with a gasp, for the dew pattered down upon him like grapeshot.

‘It seems to come from the left,’ Richardson said, heedless of the little man’s discomfiture, and then ‘Oh!’ he cried, for there was Wrine, naked as themselves, smiling from under a dandelion leaf.

‘I thought I should find you here,’ the dark man said dismissively, striding up and entering the hat. ‘You look very well naked, Mr. Tuke. You have even gained a touch of dignity.’



Mr. Tuke accepted the dignity and added a show of anger.

'Your remarkable manner is not welcome,' he replied. 'You have already taken sufficient liberty. I want to know——'

'Of course you want to know,' Wrine mocked, and repeated the mockery with emphasis. 'Don't you specialise in useless knowledge?'

'Drop that,' Richardson said. 'You've got to get us out of it now.'

'Out of what, old fellow?'

'Out of this mess, out of the grass.'

'Grass? Grass? How d'you know you're in grass?'

Richardson snorted.

'Nothing has existence save in the mind,' Wrine went on, with a fine effect of clarity. 'Luckily I have acquired the power of projecting what is in mine.'

A flash of inspiration came to Mr. Tuke. 'You mean that we are only living your dream?'

'Just that. Exactly. It interested me to imagine you both the size of insects in an English meadow, and I've projected that into your mind. You are perfectly safe, you know, if you attach any sort of importance to safety.'

'Then where are we in reality?'

Wrine shrugged. 'What is reality? Where are you ever? You imagine yourself clerk to some Borough Treasurer, you believe that you live in a neat little villa, but the truth of you might be quite otherwise. Maybe this is a truth of you, naked unaccommodated man running over the secret bareness of the earth. If only you could shake yourself free from silly delusion you might be a thousand things, each more lovely than the man you think you are.'

'But we are bound by the flesh,' Richardson objected, 'utterly enslaved by it. We are not free.'

'I am. You might be, if you tried.'

'How?' Mr. Tuke asked.

'The spark of fire, the point of cleansing truth, sits somewhere in your inward vagueness as a lamp flickers wanly in the dark perspective of a temple. If you employ it basely, how can you be other than base? As I have said now several times, the life you lead is only illusion. It has been my whim to substitute another illusion, and there may be a thousand more. Can't you imagine a better world for yourself?'

Richardson went off at a tangent. 'Imagine—may—perhaps! Why not be more definite, Wrine?'

But the tall man led them into the sunshine, which by now had swept all the grasses into colour; and together the three walked through shadow and shine, under exquisite dew and sleepy opening flowers, at ease in the soft May morning.

'Look at the grass about you,' he said. 'It is no more fleeting than human life. Sucked by the seed from the bare earth, feeding on the sun, blown by every wind, it will pass completely one day when the scythe comes this way. Think of it, Tuke! Think of it, Rich! The whole landscape of your present world will be chaff before summer ends.'

Mr. Tuke asked: 'Is man so little? We go to and fro over the earth, serene in the assurance of our empire over matter, yet here a hundred things make sport of man. Beetles dispossess him in a night, fearsome insects prey upon him, nettles loom enigmatic on his sky. Is this merely a field of fable, or does it gather all life in a knot?'

And Wrine answered quietly: 'This field may be more intense than other walks of life, but it conveys, it signifies.'

They strolled then in silence for a long time. Hunger and fear were forgotten: only the sun smote down and fluffy one-o'clocks sailed as elfin jests across the blue, only the reeds swayed and the whirl of grasshoppers threaded the filigree depths. They found spider-webs showing all the colours of the opal, they saw ants foraging and butterflies adream, they watched the dew drip slowly down to water the roots of the grasses. And suddenly it was as though Mr. Tuke for the first time saw the earth going its way as a living whole, not mere scenery at the back of his life, but something infinitely moving and sad. He thought of clouds rolling over the sky, rain falling in its due season to come forth as root and stem and flower, death following life, life following death, for ever renewing. He found himself loving his nakedness and felt now part of the earth, as all true men must be part, yet at the same time he realised his feebleness, his utter foolishness, his insignificance. The earth's song was too high for him, the earth's purpose too searching. He had a quick revulsion, a longing for his old life; and in that moment discovered himself naked and alone in a meadow, lying beside his cast-off clothing under the shadow of a tree.

## V.

He experienced a vast relief. He was back in the world of men. The Welcombe Woods were restored : at any time a policeman might come along and arrest him for being indecently exposed. He jumped with that idea and began hastily to dress. The time-piece in his pocket was still ticking. He observed that the hands stood at quarter-past nine, so he wound it up very lovingly, thinking with unwonted eagerness of dead pig and the eggs of a hen. The maid was away : he must cook them himself, but he was pleased by that because he could cook a lot and make a brave smell in the kitchen. He went down to the double hedges, without a trace of earth-love left in his mind. He started to whistle, then the tune died on his lips, for he had realised that the neighbours might have noticed his scandalous all-night absence. If they had noticed it, whatever should he say to sister Joyce ? Oh, how could he ever convince her that for eighteen hours he had been crawling like a louse through the earth's hair ?

*THAT YOUNG DEIL.*

BY DENIS D. LYELL.

THESE early memories of a boy's love for gunpowder, and the troubles he incurred, may interest some of the older generation, who, I think, were fonder of lethal weapons than the youngsters of the present time, whose hobbies usually tend to the instruments of speed, such as motor-cars and aeroplanes.

One of my first and bitterest escapades was selling a valuable stamp album, which to-day would be worth quite a large sum, and spending the small amount given to me for it by a miserly curiosity-shop man on a small pistol with which I, through carelessness, injured a cousin seriously in the face. I am still so ashamed of myself over this recklessness that I intend to leave details out. It served as a grave warning in taking care.

My first mentor in shooting with a scattergun was a dear old man, James MacEwan, who was a gardener in an uncle's employment. He had when younger been a gamekeeper, and one of his employers—a Perthshire laird—had presented him with a best-quality 18-bore flint-lock gun of which James was very proud. It is the only shotgun of that bore I have ever seen, but in these days muzzle-loaders were made in many odd calibres. At that time percussion guns were in use, and by that time—I mean the late seventies and early eighties of last century—breech-loaders were then in their early days, but a few of the older people still used muzzle-loaders, as many of them thought they shot stronger and better than the newfangled weapons.

Pinfire breech-loaders were sometimes used, and I remember getting hold of several of these cartridges with which I did mischief. I threw such a cartridge once at a minorca cock standing near a wall, and the pin exploded it and blew several feathers out of its tail.

Old James never ceased to impress on a cousin and myself the need of taking the greatest care when handling a loaded gun, and he often told us never to point it at anything we did not wish to kill, and no better advice could be given to beginners than this. I can still remember many of his quaint sayings, and the smile which used to come over his honest bearded face when he was

amused at our keenness and interest in all that appertained to shooting. His beloved flint-lock had huge hammers with the edged flints held down by big screws in the hammer-clamps, and there were the grooved pans covered by hinged flaps in which the priming powder was put. If the gun had been left loaded in wet weather the priming powder often got damp, so when the hammer fell the sparks from the flint would cause the powder to make a queer and ominous fizzling sound, before it ignited and carried to the touch-hole leading into the barrel.

At my first shot I remember James saying: 'If she dodders haud her ticht for she'll gang awricht!' I may say the word 'dodder' in broad Scots means to tremble, to potter, and so on. An interesting part of this old gun was the barrels, which James used to remark were made of soft Swedish horse-shoe nails. They were polished like silver and were, I think, a good 30 inches in length, but what surprised me was their thinness at the muzzles, for they were not thicker than the most worn threepennybit one could find. When loading the weapon with a nice brass-mounted ramrod, if one was not careful it was easy to cut one's hand on the muzzles, as they were so sharp.

My first shot was at a cock sparrow chirping on a fence, and when the hammer fell I heard the priming fizzle. James, standing alongside, heard it, too, and said. 'Haud on!' I did, and at last the weapon went off, and so did cock sparrow, for my excitement had taken my attention off my prey. The stock hit my cheek, and next day it was a bit sore, but what annoyed me most was missing that sparrow. I had often seen James fire into a flying flock of sparrows in a grainfield and fetch down a round dozen, and I wondered if I would after such a shameful beginning ever attain to such 'brilliancy' with a gun!

There was another gun kept in the gardener's shed—a single percussion 12-bore muzzle-loader, with which my cousin started shooting—I getting a shot at times. We used to hunt the rabbits in a big nursery garden near, and a Skye terrier named Jip was very clever in getting them out of the patches of young firs and other growth. One day a big hare got up and my cousin fired at it at a distance of a dozen paces or less and killed it dead. The felt wad was sticking in the hole in its back, and it was evident the shot had 'balled'—certainly a good shot.

For some reason James got dissatisfied with his flint-lock, and decided to have it converted to a percussion gun; so gave it to a

gunsmith in Dundee for the alteration. After he got it back and used caps he was very disappointed, as he asserted, probably with truth, that the change had spoilt the shooting. With a fuller knowledge of guns and ballistics I have since wondered whether this could really be so, and whether the fault was due to physical reasons. Possibly having shot so much with flint-locks his muscles had become attuned to the slower ignition, and the faster action of the percussion was too quick for him. Later a double breech-loader 12-bore had its home in the shed, and James used to kill quite well with it, but not, I think, better than with his old muzzle-loader 18-bore when it was a flint gun. Guns and men in combination is a queer business, for I remember a man who used to shoot excellently with a cheap hammer 'farmer's' gun (cost £5) who got a best-quality Dickson hammerless, and could not shoot half as well with it, although the stock of his old gun had been copied exactly.

One day James had gone to his tool-shed for the single muzzle-loading 12, and was loading it with powder when it went off, and the ramrod was carried between his fingers and went through the wooden boarding and outside slates of the house. I believe the ramrod was not seen again. Someone may have left the hammer at full cock and a cap on the nipple, but I fancy, James being a smoker, a bit of burning tobacco ash had fallen into the barrel with the powder. It gave old James a fright, and amused we boys, as we seldom went into the room without peering at the round hole in the roof—at least for some months after the incident.

Early in my sporting career I began to shoot first with a smooth-bore 'Gem' airgun, and gradually advanced to the possession of rook rifles and shotguns. I had a .295 Holland, a .320, a .380 Lancaster oval-bore, and many .220's; mostly of American manufacture—such as Colt, Marlin, Remington and Stevens. None of these were more accurate than the .295, although there was nothing much wrong with any of the .220's, if they were held straight.

My first 12-bore was a double-hammer bottom-lever breech-loader, and it weighed a good 7 lb., so took some carrying by a youngster in long walks along the shore of the Tay estuary. There is one good point about a heavy weapon—be it gun or rifle—and it is that its weight kills recoil. Once I bought a fair-quality double 12-bore hammer gun weighing 5½ lb.—a very small weight in these far-off days. I used to test that weapon severely, and I have since wondered that my head is still on my shoulders. I would

load the 12-bore cartridges so full of powder and shot that the wads could not be held by a turnover of the case. There was just space to pour some melted candle grease in which held the wad in place very well. When I fired at flighting duck (a position when one gets all the recoil) that gun fairly trembled after the explosion, and a few shots would blacken my shoulder, and make it painful for a few days afterwards. Why it did not burst I do not know; except I suppose the Damascus barrels were made of good stuff, and there did not happen to be a flaw in any part of them. This gun which I bought from old John Henderson, a gun-dealer and taxidermist in Dundee, was made by Bentley and Playfair of Birmingham.

John Henderson was a doctor's son, and when I used to go to his place in Barrack Street, and watch him skinning and mounting specimens, or repairing a broken weapon, he told me about his early life; and how he had run away from home and gone to sea. He had a good knowledge of natural history, particularly about our northern birds and animals. He taught me how to skin birds, and mounted a number for me which I presented later to the Dundee Museum.

Before leaving home in 1894 to go to India I went to see the old man and I remember how his eyes filled as he bade me good-bye, and said 'God bless you.' I believe he died soon afterwards. Although he had come down in the world he always retained that courtesy and good feeling which marks the natural gentleman, and he is one of those figures of the past I am glad I knew, for we had things in common.

It was cold work in winter waiting for ducks on the morning or evening flight, and I can remember evenings when my Harris tweed knickerbockers froze to the bent grass on which I was sitting. Particularly do I remember one night when I had brought down a mallard which looked winged. On trying to rise I found I was anchored, as the frost had, notwithstanding the natural heat of my body, frozen my pants to the grass and ground. When I forced myself clear I heard in the frosty air the wool being torn off my nether garments.

It was not easy to know exactly where the ducks would flight every night, as it depended on several things—the main points being the state of the tides and the prevailing weather. As all duck enthusiasts know, the wind is one of the most important factors, for it, when strong, keeps the birds low when they fly against it.

The moon is another important feature, as when big I found ducks would often delay coming to the land. A grey sky, or one with whitish clouds passing, gave the best shooting light at nights.

I once possessed a percussion single muzzle-loading 6-bore duck gun made by a firm named Parker. It shot very well, but was naturally slow in action as the loading took some time. Then another big gun was an 8-bore breech-loader full choke, and when one could hit them (not easy with a large bore) this weapon loaded with No. 1 would fetch duck down from a considerable height. One of the best killing guns I ever had was a 12 double-hammer ordinary 2½-inch case by Evans. With it I made some good shots, and once after giving a flock of knots both barrels I picked up about 25 birds, and lost a few in the sea.

In hard winters the Golden Plover used to come to the sea, and when one got them before they were emaciated with a lengthened spell of frost, they were not only sporting birds to shoot but good to eat. The flesh of Golden Plovers, as with Woodpigeons, after a week or two of rigid frost gets green, and the birds lose condition rapidly, and are hardly worth powder and lead.

With ordinary guns, that is 12's and 16's, I was always more successful with No. 6 and 7 shot than with No. 3 and 4, which some people think should be used for wildfowl. The chief desideratum is pattern at sporting ranges—which means within 45 yards. Big shot is only efficient in big guns which shoot big loads.

Some rare birds used to visit the Tay Estuary, and I once shot a Ross's Gull with a beautiful pink feathering on its breast. I also got a Red-breasted Snipe, and some Little Stints; and my cousin shot a Whimbrel, which is uncommon on the Estuary. I never took much pleasure in slaying birds like Oyster-catchers, Godwits, Redshanks, Ringed-Plover, Sanderlings, Dunlins, Turnstones, and such waders, but the Curlew was quite a sporting bird. They used to follow the tides, and when it was nearly full retire to the land. When the tide has begun to ebb, and was back 20 to 30 yards, they would begin to flight back to the sea. I often took up a position in the sand-dunes to await them, and usually chose a spot where one could get a view of the country. When they were not coming in a direction likely to afford a shot, it was sometimes possible to change one's position by running behind the sand hillocks and cut them off. They are wary, clever birds, and after being shot at several times in a certain locality they would change



their places of flight, and sometimes come over so high that they were out of range. Curlews, after being shot at, would occasionally, when they saw the movement of a gun, twist as quickly and fast as a Golden Plover, and second barrels at them did not always prove successful.

In the Tay were also many sea ducks such as Eiders, Long-tails, Mergansers, and various species of Scoters. Widgeons and Scaup ducks were not very plentiful, but the lovely Shelducks used to breed on the links bounding the shore round Buddon Point, and they often nested in abandoned rabbit holes, as did Jackdaws. These links used in the eighties and early nineties to teem with rabbits, and the gamekeeper told me they sometimes trapped 15,000 or more in good years. Later the Government took this land over as a military training camp, and big-gun range, and the conies were rapidly almost exterminated. There was a huge sandhill into which they used to fire, and more than once people who had no right to interfere were blown up by tampering with unexploded shells. Red flags were put up when big-gun and rifle practice were in progress, so it was wise to keep clear. Once when out in a boat fishing for coddlings a shell which had ricocheted landed 30 yards from us when we had got rather near the line of flags. The boatman, a young man named 'Podlie' Robertson, said: 'That's gye handy,' and quickly got up the ~~anchor~~ and changed to safer ground. As we pulled past the place we saw several fish floating which had been killed by concussion; and later in Africa when camped near a big river, such as the Luangwa in Northern Rhodesia, when I wanted a fish for dinner I used to put a rifle bullet over one and send in a native to fetch it out. In this case I naturally spotted my fish before I fired at it.

There is something very fascinating in wildfowl shooting compared to field-shooting, and I can remember how exhilarating it was to sit for the flight in the hours of eventide when everything was quiet except for the howling of a gale, which used to send the sand along so fast and hard that it fairly stung one's face. It was bad for the gun as the grit got into the action, so when reloading I used to turn my back to the wind. Often I got back home with my hair thick with sand, and it found its way down one's neck and worked into one's boots and pockets. With a wind coming from the front it blinded the eyes, and ducks coming along with it in bad light were past in a jiffy, and gave no hope of a shot, unless they had been spotted some way off. I remember during

a furious gale one evening a duck I killed was blown out of sight and I could not find it in the faint light. Early the following afternoon I returned and found it 150 yards from where I had fired.

Some of the sunsets were glorious, particularly for two years after the Krakatoa eruption. It is said the fine volcanic dust went round the globe at least twice, and this caused the most wonderful sunrises and sunsets men had ever seen. Some of them were really glorious in their brilliant coloration, and those who saw them can never forget their beauty, for they were magnificent.

One day when waiting for Golden Plover I saw a hare being chased by a collie dog, and it crossed the railway line which runs between Dundee and Aberdeen. The dog then lost it, but the hare ran down the beach and then headed for the water. It dashed in and swam out to sea for quite 200 yards. Then I suppose it got scared and turned back for the shore, and had a stiff swim to regain the sands as the tide was ebbing. It was then so exhausted that it lay down for about ten minutes. I approached it, and it let me get within a few yards, and I could have shot it, but thought it deserved to go free after all its excitement and fatigue. I have seen other hares cross a small stream, but never saw another take to sea water as this one did.

From Monifieth, where my people lived, we could see the Tay Bridge some six miles up the river. I am probably one of the few people alive who actually saw the disaster, which was one that filled the people of that time with horror and sorrow. Since then we have experienced the Great War, when calamities came so thick and fast that people were stunned with the immensity of the suffering and loss they incurred.

The Tay Bridge disaster occurred on Sunday, December 28, 1879, at about 7.15 p.m., and although I was only eight years old at the time I remember almost every incident of that wild night. Late in the afternoon the wind increased rapidly, and by 7 p.m. the gusts were coming along with tornado force. Monifieth House was a fairly large stone building, and up to now I had never seen a chimney-pot blown down. They began to fall in succession a little after six o'clock, and some of them smashed through the grey slate roof, and made holes in the attic which was used as a store-room. My parents with the maids had gone to the attic with basins and cloths to dry up the water, which was getting through the holes made by the chimney-pots, and had told me to stay with my two younger sisters in the dining-room. Here we had great

fun, and were particularly joyous when we heard a great bang on the roof, and heard some of the bits clattering down the slates and falling outside. The wind was getting in through a grating under one of the windows, and forcing through some of the floor-boards, making the carpet rise in lumps which we jumped on. Suddenly a pot fell on the entrance steps at the front door, and there was a big plate-glass window close to it covered by a Venetian blind. At the crash I ran to the window, and opened a space to peer through, and just as I did so I noticed a curved string of lights and sparks falling in the exact direction where the bridge could be seen in daylight. Without a doubt I had seen the bridge and train fall into the Tay, but we did not know the fact until our gardener arrived next morning and told the maids of the disaster.

After breakfast my father and I went to the beach, and found near the Dighty a lot of debris—such as two carriage doors, sleepers and cushions which had come down the river, but there were no bodies. Afterwards I heard a story of how a wife had prevented her husband from joining that train on the Fife side. She put their clock back, so when he got to the station the train had gone. Good spouse!

There is no doubt that the first Tay Bridge was a badly made construction, and I have heard that some of the engineering work in it was scandalous. When the new bridge was completed on the 20th of June, 1887, my father was asked to go out in the tug to see the last span put into place, and he took me with him. The span was floated out on barges on a full tide, and as the water ebbed the construction sank into place just like a piece in a jig-saw puzzle I thought it marvellous.

The general belief is that the bridge broke when the train was on it, as the vibration, and the extra windhold it supplied, were too much for it. The gap made was about 3,000 feet. The piles of the first bridge can be seen alongside the new bridge. About a hundred people lost their lives, and a poignant feature was that a number of men were in the train who had spent some years on service abroad, and who had almost reached their homes in the North when oblivion overtook them.

In these days there were a number of shipwrecks, almost wholly to sailing vessels, and I remember a Norwegian or Swedish ship running ashore, and some of the crew reaching land by clinging to a deck-house which had gone adrift. I also from the windows of my father's house saw a sailing boat upset when three men were

drowned, the boatman named Norrie being saved by hanging on to the submerged mast and sail. They had gone out after duck, and the boat was capsized by them rushing to one side to fire at some birds passing. It is wonderful how careless people can be, and the man who thinks before he acts is the one best able to look after himself in risky situations. However, people are often extinguished by the foolish actions of others—*vide* road accidents in the present age.

In my younger days I bought a cheap Belgian revolver for the sum of 7s. 6d., so I took it to the beach to try it. I put a tin can on the top of a large rock and fired, hoping to hit it. After the explosion the weapon seemed to disintegrate, and I heard a loud buzz. My hand and arm came back, giving my right shoulder joint quite a twist. The butt was in my hand, but the barrel and cartridge chamber had gone—thus the buzz. I suppose the beastly thing was so badly made that the bullet in the cartridge had not been in alignment with the bore. Anyhow, I thought I was well out of that in retaining my right hand for future use. Moral—Don't buy continental ironmongery!

Now to continue these reminiscences I shall relate an amusing story of another pistol of the muzzle-loading order—I mean amusing to my readers, but anything but funny to the sufferer, and myself who caused the trouble. When I was about fourteen years of age a friend of my father's had come to visit us in Angus. Like my parent he was a great pigeon fancier, and he lived in Surrey, near Woking. Kindly, but foolishly for himself he suggested that I should visit him one summer, so when that time came I found myself being met by the dear old fellow at King's Cross. Having changed stations to Waterloo we soon got to Woking—my friend's house being in the country a mile or so away. He lived in a nice cottage, with a pretty garden, various outhouses and an orchard behind. He had a couple named Goodman who did for him—the man the garden and livestock, and the wife the cooking and housework. Goodman was an ex-naval man, and went lame in one leg; due, I believe, to a fall from aloft. After this mishap he had to retire and was fortunate in finding such a good master as my friend R. An important member of the *ménage* was a big bulldog, which was great fun, as it was a fat good-tempered animal much petted by everyone.

Mr. R. belonged to an old Army family, and he told me his father had been all through the Russian war in a famous cavalry

regiment, and I was interested in seeing and handling his sabre which had likely done good work in that hard campaign. My friend was a tea merchant in Mincing Lane, and his chief hobbies were pigeons and his rose garden and orchard.

A few days after my arrival I had walked down with him to Woking Station to see him off, as he usually visited London two or three times a week. When he said good-bye he remarked: 'I hope you will behave yourself, and remember you are in civilised England and not in the wilds of Scotland!' I promised to adhere to instructions, and was strolling out of the station when my eye caught sight of two huge coloured glass jars in the window of a chemist's shop near the station. I walked over to have a closer look at the red and green orbs, when I spotted a pistol fixed to a sheet of cardboard marked: 'Horse-pistol 2s. 6d.' This was certainly a most extraordinary object to see in a chemist's shop, but so it was. I felt in my pocket to see if I had the wherewithal, and found I had just enough to become the owner, so I walked in and requested to see the article. It was soon mine, and wrapped in a bit of brown paper; and off I went to the cottage as pleased as Punch.

Now Goodman in a shed had an old muzzle-loader, and he had previously told me he slew all the tits he found in the orchard as they did great damage to the blossom. I soon found the powder and shot flasks which reposed in a drawer, so proceeded to load the horse-pistol. I did not know much then about suitable charges for different types of weapons, so inserted the loads the flasks registered—which I suppose were in the region of 3 drams and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz. of shot. The wads were too small, so I used bits of brown paper, and capped the nipple with a cap out of a small round tin which was also in the drawer. This pistol had a large hammer, and its barrel was a good foot in length. The bore must have been about 8, for it seemed very large compared to the 12-bore wads.

All the time I had been busy I had been listening to old Goodman scraping in one of the pigeon-houses, so I slipped out and made for the orchard bent on tit extirpation. I knew there would be a bit of a row when the shot went off, as I had been told by Mr. R. to leave the gun alone, but I thought that the corpse of a raiding tit might help to balance the account.

After searching for some minutes I found not only one but a pair of tom-tits; and could easily have got a shot at one. However, I now resolved to try to get the pair in line, as I thought if one

tit brings solace to my elders, two tits would bring more ! The Creator was certainly looking after one of his undeserving children when he put this reasoning into my head !

All this time I had forgotten one of the most important of God's creatures, and her name was ' Woman ' ! As it happens, when I sneaked out of the shed Mrs. Goodman had spotted me from a bedroom window, where she had been tidying up ; and when I disappeared into the orchard she had come down and told Goodman to follow and see what I was doing.

I almost got the pair of tits in alignment on several occasions, but tits are restless birds, and just as I was on the point of squeezing the trigger one or the other would hop away. Again the kind Creator was watching !

I was peering about and dodging aside when suddenly a hand clasped my shoulder, and a gruff voice enquired, ' What I was doing, and where I got the powder for that 'er thing,' and so on.

Goodman took the pistol from me, and said he intended to have the first shot, which I thought most unfair. In fact I remarked : ' That's my pistol,' but he only replied : ' You've pinched my powder.' This was untrue, I told him, for it was Mr. R.'s powder. We were arguing when a tit hopped into a tree close to us.

Up went the pistol and there was a tremendous bang and a buzz of something disappearing over the trees. Goodman gave a roar, and began cursing, and he kept swinging his right hand backwards and forwards, and I saw blood pouring from his hand ; and something was sticking to it which he could not remove, though I saw him trying his best to do so. He then rushed to the house and kept calling his wife.

It took all the resolution I possessed to follow him, for I was scared and dreadfully sorry for him ; but I followed him into the kitchen, and saw his wife holding his hand in a basin of cold water which soon was the colour of blood, as his hand was bleeding profusely. When I approached I saw that the butt of the pistol was attached to his hand by the trigger, which had rebounded with the force of the explosion, and locked through the flesh between the thumb and the forefinger. Goodman was furious, and was cursing me heartily, when his wife asked me to go over to a house near and ask the coachman there to get a doctor, which I did. Fortunately the man was in and soon left to bring medical help.

As it was neither safe nor diplomatic to be near the sufferer I went back to the scene of the accident, and then tried to find the

barrel of the pistol which had been blown away. My search was fruitless in the orchard, and I think it had been sent into the property of the next house where there was a young wood plantation. When I heard the doctor's trap arrive I went back to the house, and was sitting on a seat in the rose garden when the doctor came out. He sent his coachman away, and then came over to me and told me he had sent his man off for a blacksmith to come to remove the butt of the pistol. After going in to see Goodman he returned and asked me all about it : where I got the weapon and so on ; and I fancy that chemist was in for trouble for selling lethal weapons to small boys ! At this time I cannot remember that doctor's name, but he was a good fellow, for he said he would meet Mr. R.'s train and smooth things up as much as he could.

I may add the smith, after causing Goodman much pain, got the butt removed by breaking the hammer with his pliers.

When Mr. R. got home he had evidently seen the doctor, for all he said was : ' I think your father would like you home ' —which perhaps was doubtful. So I went home, and later heard poor Goodman had made a good recovery, and escaped lock-jaw, which was a possible result of such a wound.

At Christmas time a passage in a letter from Mr. R. to my parents read something as follows, I believe : ' I hope your home has not been blown to the skies by the eldest of your progeny ! '

These true stories should form a lesson to the young who tamper with things they have no knowledge of. Since these far-distant days I have naturally learnt quite a lot, and my craze for weapons has been with me all my life.

I have possessed guns and rifles by most of our noted British gunsmiths, and I need not give their names, as they are known to all sportsmen. When I was in India and Africa I began to spend most of my spare cash on weapons, and I sometimes wish I had some of the money back. Most of the shotguns were bought second-hand, but the rifles were mainly new. Best-quality second-hand weapons usually cost a half, or even only a third, of the new price ; and can often be got from gunmakers and dealers. The barrels are the main part of a gun to examine, for the greater proportion of the wear and tear occurs there. However, there is no need to go into that, as this is not a treatise on guns.

I doubt whether it really pays to chop and change much, for as I have often written, the great thing is to know one's weapon, or weapons. Great shots such as our lamented King George and

Lord de Grey (Marquess of Ripon) probably tried every type of shotgun, and yet they stuck to Purdey hammer 12-bores, probably because they had got so accustomed to them when beginning their sporting careers that they felt there was something missing in hammerless actions. I remember old James saying, when handling a hammerless: 'A gun wanting dog-heads is no a gun avaa'; and regarding looks, perhaps he was right, until we of the older generation got accustomed to the nakedness of the weapons, and appreciated their advantages of safety and so on.

As I had nearly closed these reminiscences I have just remembered a rather amusing incident with a toy brass cannon which measured some 6 inches in length, nicely mounted on a wooden carriage. Among my father's pictures which hung in the dining-room was one depicting the British fleet of men-of-war anchored in Table Bay, and this stirred my bellicose tendencies and longing to hear a good bang. Near this picture was a very fine one in oils of a banyan tree in Bengal done by the noted artist Daniel—or was it Daniels? Seizing the opportunity one day when my parents were absent I prepared the scene as follows: getting a big flat bath I put it on the dining-room table, and filled it almost full by carrying jugs of water from the pantry, and met with some opposition from Lizzie the housemaid, but induced her to help, on the plea I was to sail my small yacht in the bath. I then built a battery with books and bricks alongside the bath. Some time before I had got hold of and secreted a 12 pinfire cartridge, so I cut it open and put at least half of the powder in the brass cannon, making sure a little was put over the touch-hole. Some of the shot went in, too. I then, after aligning the piece on the yacht, touched it off with a long wax taper, and it was fortunate the taper was long, for I might in naval language have 'lost the number of my mess' had I stood directly behind the cannon. As usual there was a resounding bang, followed by a crash behind, and the splintering of glass in front. I had thought the yacht, water and opposite side of the bath would have stopped the shot, but my knowledge of ballistics was wholly at fault! The cannon had naturally lifted with the recoil, and it hit the wall within two inches of the banyan-tree frame, making a great dent in the paper and plaster. Then I heard voices and cries, and the three maids burst into the room, the robust cook, Jessie Elder, using very bad language, for she had already experienced in her nervous system a demonstration of ballistics which I shall relate in due course. After much argument I per-



suaded them to get steps, and move the picture over the dent in the wall, by sliding it along the rail a few inches. Then a pan was brought and the plate glass, mostly outside, removed; and finally two of them took away the bath with contents. The yacht itself was intact as the shot had only riddled the sail. When my parents returned I suffered in the usual way (my then seat of knowledge); but it would have been far worse had the cannon gone through the picture. The hole in the wall remained undiscovered for a long time, but the big plate-glass window certainly cost several pounds to replace.

Now for an explanation as to why Jessie Elder disliked gunpowder, the sound of which nearly drove her into a frenzy. On an occasion approaching Christmas she was making mince-pies, and putting them to cool on the ledge of the kitchen window. When passing near I saw her doing this, so stalked up low and grabbed them. I was busy underneath on No. 3 when she spotted me, and leaning out of the window threw a big rolling-pin which hit me a wallop in the small of the back. It hurt considerably, so, although not of a revengeful nature, I told Jessie she was 'for it' some day.

The following summer the chance came when she was making strawberry jam in a big brass pot. Strawberry jam emits a penetrating scent, and I was soon aware of her occupation. Going to the kitchen door I asked Jessie what she was doing, and she told me she was making jam and was just going to dress two fowls in the scullery between times. Going off to my room I got a cartridge, and brought it to the kitchen, as she was still busy with the birds. Slipping the pot aside I dropped it in the fire which looked pretty rosy. She heard me, and came to see what I was doing, and remarked: 'What are you up to, Master Denis?' She was a suspicious woman with a potent tongue but a good cook! I suggested I had better go, and she agreed, as she was very busy. I pretended to leave, and made a noise as if I had shut the door, but left a chink.

It took nearly five minutes for that cartridge to explode, but when it did the result was efficacious as I can testify. She had been stirring the jam a moment before the explosion and had turned away. When I looked she had flopped into a wooden chair with her hands clasped across her capacious bust, and was gasping as I have never seen a woman gasp since! I opened the door and said, 'That's for the mince-pies, Jessie!' I may say the

brass pot was afterwards discovered to be undamaged except for a bulge, but lots of the jam had left the pot and was distributed over the range. That was the reason Jessie simply loathed 'villainous saltpetre'!

During a snowstorm I threw a hard snowball at one of my sisters but missed her. A younger sister who was behind received the missile in the eye, and it pained her so greatly that she cried. My father was near, and was so annoyed that he promised to give me a thrashing before I got up next morning. Needless to say I had a disturbed night, and was wide awake next morning when he arrived. I had prepared my course of action, and had pulled my bed sufficiently away from the wall at the head to let a nippy youngster through, but forming a barrier against someone more robust. It came off splendidly, for I got round and outside, pulling the door behind me. Racing to the stairs I took them in bounds like a gazelle; and was soon at the front door, and out into the bitter world, for the snow still lay deep. I was in a thin nightshirt, for these were the days before pyjamas, and, of course, my legs and feet were bare. The snow, however, was soft, so I made for a clump of fir trees and climbed into one. My dad had gone to his bedroom to finish dressing, and he came to the window, and spotted me in my roost, and shouted to me to come back. As he was speaking we heard the back gate slam. This was Tom Fergusson arriving to his work. My father called him, and when he came up pointed towards me, and told Tom to fetch me in; so the old fellow was soon looking up at me, and telling me to descend, or he would come up and pull me down. I naturally refused to budge, and asked whether my father had said anything about not whipping me? Tom replied there was nothing said on that point, but if I did not come down at once he was coming up. The old man had a big red face, surmounted by greyish whiskers, and a big yellow front tooth which projected from his lower jaw, and he was a dour hefty Scot, so I determined to keep clear. As he slowly climbed the fir I went on until I got near the top which began to bend. Tom was getting old, and he sometimes complained of rheumatics and lumbago, and was not the build to make a good climber. He kept asking me to come down in grumbles and mumbles, and I not only refused, but told him if he came near I would kick him in the face. By this time I had drawn up my legs, and must have looked a funny object to my parent, who was at his bedroom window surveying the scene, and inciting Tom to do

his duty quickly. Thus spurred he made one desperate scramble nearer, and stretched out his right hand to grab my foot. What would have happened had he managed to seize it I cannot tell, but he didn't, for I kicked out and hit him full in the face. Having only a hold with his left hand, and apparently an insecure one with his legs, he let go, and grunting hard went to earth—breaking several branches off on the way.

My father who had witnessed the scene seemed more enraged than poor Tom, who fortunately had a soft landing on the bed of fir needles, although I did hear some potent remarks about 'that young deil'!

By this time my kind mother was taking a hand in the proceedings, and had induced my furious father to remit the promised whacking, so a half-frozen little mortal came back, was rushed to bed with two hot bottles and a warm breakfast to follow. So much for a bad shot with a hard snowball! It was really hardly worth it! For a long time old Tom used to mutter when we came across one another, and when he was annoyed he had a way of wobbling his projecting fang with his tongue. Were I an Ananias I would have added that my kick dislodged it; but it didn't, for as long as I remember him it managed to remain in place. He was an honest, hard-working old fellow, and we could do with more of his type than can be found to-day in Scotland.

### THE RUNNING BROOKS.

- The Life of George Moore* : Joseph Hone (Gollancz, 15s. n.).  
*Fanny Burney* Christopher Lloyd (Longmans, 10s. 6d. n.).  
*J. T. Grein* : Michael Orme (Murray, 10s. 6d. n.).  
*Scott of the Shan Hills* · Edited by G. E. Mitton (Lady Scott) (Murray, 15s. n.).  
*Zest for Life : Recollections of a Philosophic Traveller* : Johan Wøller : Translated from the Danish by Claude Napier (Lovat Dickson, 8s. 6d. n.).  
*Hebridean Holiday* : Owen Hamilton (Williams & Norgate, 7s. 6d. n.).  
*The Gods Had Wings* : W. J. Brown (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.).  
*All Quiet at Home* : Josephine Kamm (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.).  
*The Uncounted Hour* . Warner Allen (Constable, 7s. 6d. n.).  
*The Gold and the Grey* . Hilton Brown (Blackwell, 5s. n.).

*The Life of George Moore*, by Mr. Joseph Hone (the long-awaited 'authorised biography'), is a monumental work on the side of industry as well as a finely convincing study in personal portraiture, in which the author's deliberate avoidance of anything approaching exhaustive literary criticism in the body of his text makes the final effect all the more remarkable. This aspect of a perennially interesting subject has been assigned to Mr. Desmond Shawe-Taylor, who from 'a deep appreciation and a close knowledge' of his writings contributes a chapter on 'The Achievement of George Moore'—a short essay in considered criticism that carries weight by its sensitive writing and stimulates by the provocation of some of its perspectives. The book also contains, in addition to its immensely full documentation in the form of letters and personal anecdote, an entertaining, observant account of Moore's last years in Ebury Street supplied by his housekeeper, Miss Clara Warville. It is indeed from first to last a volume of a great interest, a veritable compendium of fact skilfully collated and analysed from which the figure of its enigmatic subject emerges in clear-cut design.

The fame of *Fanny Burney*, the writer, rests mainly upon the contemporary success of her novel, 'Evelina.' In the first full biography of her Mr. Christopher Lloyd has been at pains to elucidate and reveal not so much the novelist as the woman. For, though her outstanding talent as a diarist has long been recognised, it is Mr. Lloyd's contention that these published volumes, 'in spite of their bulk, are by no means self-revealing,' and that it is necessary to go behind them 'to other sources of information

which have only been made available within the last twenty years, if we wish to discover what sort of a person Miss Burney really was.' In this self-imposed task he has achieved an admirable success, bringing both the period and the personality to vivid life in all their variety of association, event, and adventure. This last seems an unexpected word to be applicable to the shy, retiring little authoress who, nevertheless, endured much tedium (and also terror) as lady-in-waiting at the court of George III during his first madness, was a favourite of Dr. Johnson's, saw exile in Napoleonic France with her husband, General D'Arblay, and heard from Brussels the guns of Waterloo.

The biography of *J. T. Grein* by his wife, 'Michael Orme,' has been well described as 'the story of a pioneer,' since the words most aptly summarise the work of this most original Dutchman in the world of the English theatre. It is a book whose significance no student of our national drama will fail to recognise. For J. T. (as he was affectionately and universally called) was not only an idealist but a constructive reformer whose practical contributions to dramatic history included, among innumerable others, the founding of the Independent Theatre, the championship of Ibsen, and the production of Bernard Shaw's first play. From the vast mass of the material accumulated in the course of her husband's fifty years' unceasing work as impresario and dramatic critic, 'Michael Orme' has built up a great record of endeavour, endurance, and achievement. But her book has a deeper interest than the merely documentary. Charminglly written, humorous and gracious, it re-creates with both strength and tenderness the living personality of a man whose selfless devotion to the cause of dramatic art in all its manifestations has left an ineradicable mark upon the English theatre.

*Scott of the Shan Hills*, edited by Lady Scott under her pseudonym of G. E. Mitton, also represents a tireless labour of love in the selection from and amplification of voluminous correspondence, diaries, and official reports. Sir J. George Scott saw his first journalistic service as a special correspondent in Perak, and was the author of several important volumes on Burma. But, though he was never happy without pen and paper ready at hand, it is the account of his courageous, single-handed dealings with the wild tribes of the Shan Hills, his work in connection with the first Anglo-Chinese Boundary Commission, and the many and varied adventures of his distinguished administrative career which lend

colour and excitement to the story of a life told so nearly in his own trenchant words as to make it read almost like an autobiography, is one of compelling interest both personal and historical.

Dr. Johan Wøller's *Zest for Life* (translated from the Danish by Mr. Claude Napier) was written mostly at odd moments on board ship, on holiday in Denmark, or in rest-houses in the Javanese mountains. It is a discursive volume, both geographically and mentally, but with an underlying unity of thought and purpose—the kind of 'travel book' in which the spirit is of infinitely greater importance than the form. But, concerned as Dr. Wøller is with the inwardness of what he sees, or even more often deduces—and possibly for that very reason—his descriptions are by no means one-dimensional but have indeed a rich depth and vigour of their own. As their sub-title, 'Recollections of a Philosophic Traveller,' indicates, his pages are reflective as well as mobile, a mirror of thought as well as of movement in which the discriminating reader may perceive many things either unnoticed by, or unintelligible to, the ordinary tourist who travels rather to see than to know.

Major Owen Hamilton's *Hebridean Holiday* is not, as he himself tells us, designed to portray any 'profound analysis of Scottish character but is, rather, a series of quick, impressionistic travel-pictures sketched during a four-months' wandering in the West Highlands and Hebrides.' As such it serves its purpose admirably, evoking with swift, incisive strokes the characteristic features of such places as Oban and Skye, Mull, and Edinburgh, with illuminating or humorous comments upon the people he encountered and their ways and talk. A book, as its publishers put it, 'to be read at home in anticipation of a holiday, or after the return to conjure up again the atmosphere of the mountains and the sea.'

'It is unnatural rather than natural history,' says Mr. W. J. Brown in describing his enchanting little book on bird mythology, *The Gods Had Wings*. This is a subject on which all too little has hitherto been made available to the general reader, and both lovers of bird lore in the ordinary sense as well as those whose interest is concerned with folk-tales and mythology have cause to be grateful to Mr. Brown for his delightful, erudite, and readable exposition of the legends, traditions, and superstitions attaching to birds. To some of his feathered protagonists he gives chapters to themselves—Owls, the Cuckoo, the Eagle, the Cock, the Wren, and the Nightingale. Another, 'The Gospel According to the Birds,' deals with bird legends connected with Christianity

from many countries: yet another examines the part played by birds in the history of the Flood as given in 'Genesis': another still treats of the *Raræ Aves*—the roc, the phoenix, the pelican, the barnacle-goose. The whole is a fascinating volume, scholarly and humorous, to which the wood engravings by Mr. John Farleigh add a characteristic and very pleasant note.

*All Quiet at Home*, a first novel by Mrs. Josephine Kamm, tells the story of Penelope and her husband, their three children, and Alan Watt—beautiful enough to be a film star—whose incursion into the domestic circle proves in the end to be less devastating than might have been expected. However, since life is perhaps quite often like that, the author may be acquitted of failing altogether to solve the problem of marital infidelity which she somewhat glibly propounds, and may be commended for a good deal of verisimilitude in her drawing of the circumstances—the children's illnesses, the Woolworth Christmas shopping, the unapproachability of the adolescent Anne, the stodgy dependability of a house-agent husband, the pushing of perambulators—which make up Penelope's daily round. In dealing with religious exaltation she is less sure of her ground. Some of the people affected by it seem to be not so much 'changed' as changeable.

Mr. Warner Allen, joint author with Mr. E. C. Bentley of 'Trent's Own Case,' has now made a solo flight into the realm of the detective thriller in *The Uncounted Hour*, an ingenious exploitation of the apparently missing sixty minutes between midnight, summer-time, and midnight, winter-time, during which the wealthy owner of a large country house is gassed in his absent wife's bedroom. The inquest verdict is 'suicide.' But neither the author, nor for that matter the reader, can agree with this, for, like all good mysteries, it takes more than a coroner's jury to unravel it. And if one's suspicions, rather for lack of than because of direct evidence, fasten rather quickly upon the real criminal, the final bringing to book is so intricately delayed and so unexpectedly contrived that there is an additional pleasure in being able to say 'I told you so.'

*The Gold and the Grey: Some More Collected Verses, 1930-1935*, by Mr. Hilton Brown, falls naturally into its two sections under the colours of its title—the first, South India, the second, Home. The poems aspire to no high flights of imagination or emotion. They are none the less sensitively rhythmical and rhymed, keenly aware of beauty, and even in their most ironical or denunciatory

moments stamped with a sure craftsmanship in word or colour. Mr. Brown has, moreover, the advantage over those to whom the great-sounding names of Eastern geography are nothing more than names of being able to incorporate their seductive syllables with fine effect both as regards feeling and metre.

## SOME OTHER RECENT BOOKS.

*Obiter Scripta. Lectures, Essays and Reviews* George Santayana: Edited by Justus Buchler and Benjamin Schwartz (Constable, 10s. n.).

Covering some thirty years and a wide diversity of subjects, this selection represents its editors' sympathy with 'the latent impulses' of Professor Santayana's mind and gives the reader a pleasurable opportunity of studying his philosophy.

*Elizabethan Seamen* Douglas Bell (Longmans, 12s. 6d. n.).

A spirited re-telling of the adventurous histories of the sixteenth-century seamen and explorers

*The Making of Modern Turkey: From Byzantium to Angora.* Sir Harry Luke, C.M.G. (Macmillan, 10s. 6d. n.).

The product of a study of Turkish conditions based on over thirty years' experience and observation.

*We Were Seven:* William Fryer Harvey (Constable, 8s. 6d. n.).

Ten years of Quaker family life in the eighties and nineties re-created with imaginative charm and humour.

*Many Enchantments:* Lesley Keen Segal (Peter Davies, 7s. 6d. n.).

A chronicle of strange happenings in a village whose inhabitants were by turns beguiled, bedevilled, and bewitched.

*Steam Packet:* David Mathew (Longmans, 6s. n.).

A rather elegant 'period piece' descriptive of a group of travellers crossing the Channel in a wooden paddle-steamer to attend Queen Victoria's coronation.

*Simple Annals:* Anonymous (Lovat Dickson, 6s. n.).

A member of the 'new poor' recounts her experiences as a country cottager.

*Gari-Gari: The Call of the African Wilderness:* Hugo Adolf Bernatzik (Constable, 10s. 6d. n.).

An account of adventures among the natives between the Nile and the Congo by the author of *Sudsee*, illustrated with his own inimitably excellent photographs.

*Wuk the Wolf:* Friedrich Heydenau: Translated from the German by Margaret Hardie (M. C. Forrester, 5s. n.).

An appealing story of the devotion between a wolf-dog and his Austrian master on patrol duty on the Bosnian frontier.

*Collective Insecurity:* Kenneth Macassey (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.).

Plot and counter-plot, revolution and intrigue in a mythical European state. Fantastic satire, not to be taken seriously.

*Rural Roundabout:* Hockley Clarke (Allman, 3s. 6d. n.).

A pleasantly informative record of country scenes and incidents in order of the seasons.

M. E. N.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

### DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 157.

THE EDITOR of the CORNHILL offers two prizes of books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue, to the two solvers of the Literary Acrostic whose letters are opened first. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albermarle Street, W.1, and must contain the Coupon from page v of the preliminary pages of this issue. They must reach the Editor by the 28th November.

'Still on thy banks so ——— ———  
 May numerous herds and flocks be seen,  
 And lassies chanting o'er the pail,  
 And shepherds piping in the dale,'

1. 'A ——— shape she floated by,  
 Dead-pale between the houses high,'
2. 'Listen and ——— to us,  
 In name of great Oceanus,  
 By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,  
 And Tethys grave majestick pace.'
3. 'No voice, no lute, no pipe, no ——— sweet  
 From chain-swung censer teeming ;'
4. 'Here the anthem doth commence :—  
 ——— and constancy is dead ,'
5. 'Hard by ——— wood, now smiling as in scorn,  
 Mutt'ring his wayward fancies he would rove,'

Answer to Acrostic 155, September number. 'O to dream, O to awake and *WANDER* There, and with delight to take and *RENDER*, Through the trance of silence, Quiet breath !' (R. L. Stevenson : 'In the Highlands'). 1. *Whither* (Robert Bridges : 'A Passer-by'). 2. *Awake* (Kipling : 'Recessional'). 3. *Norman* (Henry Newbolt : 'He fell among Thieves'). 4. *Dead* (Arthur O'Shaughnessy : 'Ode'). 5. *Exile* (Wilfred Blunt : 'Gibraltar'). 6. *Remember* (R. L. Stevenson : 'Romance').

The first correct answers opened were sent by 'Viridis,' Birmingham, and Miss M. D. Evans, Wavecrest, Swanage. These two solvers are invited to choose books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue.

# THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

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DECEMBER 1936.

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## *THE BELLS OF BETHLEHEM.*

By ARCHER CUST

ONCE more at Christmastide millions of listeners will hear the Bells of the Nativity announce the glad tidings of the Saviour's Birth.

Many now have made the journey to Bethlehem themselves and have taken part in the great ceremonies which are held in the venerable building that has been a centre of Christian worship since its foundation in the fourth century by the Emperor Constantine. For the way is no longer difficult, and the perils that beset the pilgrim of old are no more.

The 'little Town of Bethlehem' lies some four miles due south of Jerusalem just east of the main road that leads to Hebron and Beersheba. It crowns the last line of heights that look down over the Wilderness of Judæa and across the Dead Sea to the uplands of Moab beyond. In the middle distance the flat-topped hill where still may be seen the ruins of Herod's burial-place is prominent. Below runs the Wady-el-Nar (The Vale of Fire, on account of its intense dryness and heat in summer), which starting from Aceldama outside Jerusalem winds through the parched, tumbled ridges to the isolated Greek convent of Mar Saba and eventually to the Dead Sea near Engeddi. In the midst of this waste lies the traditional Cave of Adullam, a vast underground maze in which the unwary can easily get lost, where the young David took refuge, flying 'as a partridge' from the vindictive Saul. In the foreground is the white enclosure of the Greek convent of Theodosius, where a detachment of British machine-gunners put up a magnificent defence against powerful Turkish attacks during the Great War.

The Church of the Nativity is built on a spur that projects eastward of the height on which the town stands. It has thus been down the ages the last bastion of the 'sown' and the settled population: beyond is wilderness and the Land of Ishmael. Caravans still pass below its walls along the ancient desert route from the Dead Sea. By such a route must the Magi have come, climbing up and up as the Star led them, till at last their weary feet came to rest in a humble stall. To a traveller, winding his way among

the twisted ridges, the lights of the town above seem first to the right and then to the left, now straight in front, now almost directly behind. Only in the last stretch, when the valley straightens and widens, do they seem to settle ahead. Does the story of the Star here find an explanation? We may allow ourselves to wonder this, for the spiritual significance of a miracle need not suffer from the fact that it may have a natural background and setting.

The Church is actually a complex of churches and conventual buildings, of which the ancient Basilica of Constantine, beneath which is the Grotto that marks the site of the Stable, forms the core. The Basilica is flanked on the north side by the modern Hospice and Church of the Franciscans—whose bells it is that are broadcast on Christmas Eve—and by the well-preserved cloister of the Crusading period. On the south side lies the great Greek Orthodox Convent, part of which was the ancient belfry, now but half its original height as it was severely damaged by an earthquake in 1575. Its massive proportions, however, and tremendously thick walls testify to its former magnificence; for even more than Durham, the Church of the Nativity must of necessity have been half House of God and half fortress. West of the Orthodox Convent lies the Armenian, which too has more the guise of a fortification, and in between, abutting on the apse of the south transept, is a courtyard where on Christmas Eve, by permission of the Orthodox Archbishop, the Anglican congregation meets to sing carols beneath the stars and to hold a short service prior to spending a few silent moments in the Grotto below, the hallowed spot whither, as for the last nineteen centuries, the thoughts of all Christian men and women are at that season turning.

The Basilica is approached from the west across a Parvis, built over some immense cisterns, which was until recently paved with old worn flagstones but is now asphalted—perhaps a regrettable change. On the right hand is the massive wall of the Armenian Convent, pierced by a few small barred windows; to the left, the ground falls away sharply and the view is open across grey-green olive groves and vineyards towards Jerusalem. Traces may still be seen below of the Roman aqueduct which brought water to Jerusalem from the huge reservoirs known as the Pools of Solomon that lie a mile to the south, winding it has been calculated a total distance of some twenty miles—truly a remarkable feat of engineering.

The façade originally possessed three portals: the left-hand and

the great central lintels can still be seen, but that on the right is hidden by the Armenian wall. At present the only entrance is a narrow opening through a partially built-up Gothic doorway, a device adopted for defensive purposes and to prevent the local Arabs from using the Church as a stable for camels. There is an interesting legend that the reason why the Basilica escaped the wholesale destruction that took place during the Persian invasion under Chosroes in the seventh century was because above the portals was a mosaic of the visit of the Magi who were depicted as Persian Kings. Certainly there must have been some unusual cause why the Church escaped the melancholy fate that at that time overtook almost all the Christian buildings in the Holy Land.

Stooping low and carefully, for the old stones are deeply furrowed by the feet of countless generations of pilgrims and worshippers, we enter first the narthex and then, passing what was previously the Turkish Guard-room, through a finely carved door the main Church. Let it be best in the evening, when the gloom is shot by the numerous lamps and lanterns that hang from the roof. Perhaps there will be a service in progress in the Choir ahead of us, when the air will be incense-laden and the figures of worshippers will be passing up and down, many doubtless wearing the distinctive high head-dress of the Bethlehem women, which tradition says is derived from the fashions of the Crusading era.

As our eyes become accustomed to the dim light, we can distinguish the simple, dignified form of an early Christian basilica. On each side is a double row of Corinthian pillars, eleven in each row, which support architraves bearing a wall pierced by clerestory windows. Below and around these windows were once rich mosaics, added by the Byzantine Emperor Manuel Comnenus in the twelfth century, during that brief period when Eastern and Western Christianity sank their differences and made common cause against the infidel. The columns too were once adorned with figures of Saints and Apostles, but little of all this decoration remains to-day. The roof is wooden, but will be hid in gloom. It is interesting to reflect that in 1482 our Edward IV supplied the lead when the Church was re-roofed: his munificent gift, however, was put to more temporal use by the Turks, who stripped it in the early part of the seventeenth century and converted it into munitions of war.

It is known that Constantine's building was restored and enlarged about A.D. 530 by the Emperor Justinian, who built the great

belfry and added the three apses. It was not known, however, to what extent he modified the main design of the building. Two years ago a chance sounding revealed the original mosaic floor lying some three feet below the present surface of the nave. The mosaic was of the interlaced geometrical design common in Byzantine architecture, and was in parts in an exceptionally fine state of preservation. At the same time the staircase of the original descent to the Grotto was brought to light. For some reason in his restoration Justinian wished to conceal the mosaic—such decoration may by that time have gone out of fashion or been held to savour too much of the old paganism—and it became clear that he accomplished his purpose by raising the columns on a new foundation wall, without however departing from the original outline, and then covering the old floor with rubble up to the new level. We may thus be grateful to him for having preserved so much of the work of Constantine's craftsmen.

If a service is in progress it will be an office of the Orthodox Church, and here we shall at once become introduced to the intricacies of the 'Status Quo.' The 'Status Quo Ante Bellum,' to give the phrase in full, is the complicated code under which the usages and privileges of the different sects that have standing in the Holy Places are regulated. The war in question was the Crimean War, that pointless conflict which arose in part from the rivalries and jealousies in the Holy Places, and in particular in the Church of the Nativity, between the Orthodox, championed by Russia, and the Latins, who were supported by France and the other Roman Catholic Powers.

This is not the place to attempt to set out in any detail the confused story of the 'Status Quo,' for this would involve a lengthy study of the political history of the Christian Churches for a thousand years back. Suffice it to say that in 1852, the Sultan Abdul Medjid, driven desperate by the intrigues of the Powers over this question, issued a Firman laying down that whatever was the practice at that moment, whether as regards usage or ownership, was to be maintained, and he would listen to no further claims or counterclaims until these tiresome quarrels should once and for all be settled.

The Treaties that brought to a close the Crimean and the Russo-Turkish wars left this delicate question as it was. When, however, as a result of the Great War, the Moslem was finally expelled and the sites connected with the life on earth of Jesus

Christ passed once more under the control of a Christian Power, when moreover Russian influence had disappeared and the French protectorate over the Latin institutions, that dated from the time of the Most Christian King, became obsolete, the peacemakers felt there was an exceptional opportunity to get this vexed question solved. Provision was accordingly made in the Palestine Mandate for the appointment by the Mandatory of a special Commission 'to study, devise and determine the rights and claims of the different communities in connection with the Holy Places.' Meanwhile the Mandatory would be responsible for preserving existing rights. In other words, the Palestine Government took over from the Sultan the thankless task of maintaining the 'Status Quo,' a duty which it appears will lie upon it for an indefinite time to come, as the difficulties of forming the Holy Places Commission have not unexpectedly proved insuperable. It may be added that this task is undoubtedly facilitated by the fact that the Anglican Church has no standing in the Holy Places whatsoever.

The 'Status Quo' was declared when the predominance lay with the Orthodox. This was not so in the middle of the eighteenth century when Western Christianity had control over the majority of the Holy Places. By the end, however, of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, profiting by the preoccupation of their rivals in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, the Orthodox had reversed the position. And nowhere is this more marked than in the Church of the Nativity. Thus, whereas the Orthodox may hold processions and conduct their affairs in the Nave, the rights of the Latins are limited to direct passage from the entrance to their convent door between the first and second pillars of the Northern rows. Again, the main Choir and the south Transept are in the exclusive possession of the Orthodox. In the north Transept, however, the position is very involved, as the Armenian, the Coptic and the Syrian Orthodox rites all have altars here, while the Latins have the right of passage across from the entrance of their Church to the northern doorway leading down to the Grotto. Formerly there was constant friction in this part of the Church, and a small portion of the floor is reserved to the Government as a station, if necessary, for police. Trouble may arise, too, over the repair and cleaning of the windows, such action implying a right of possession. A story is told that before the War the Orthodox repaired a window over which the Latins claimed a right: the canny Turk, however, solved the difficulty by sending up a mason who pretended to break

the Orthodox pane and replace it with one supplied by the Government, and susceptibilities were satisfied !

As is to be expected, in the Grotto itself the rules of the ' *Status Quo* ' are especially rigid, whether it be in regard to the placing of an ikon or to the height from the ground of a particular hanging. Such matters must seem trivial, even puerile to our minds ; yet they express the depth of men's feelings about Him whose early story hallowed these sites.

The Orthodox Church and the other rites that are in communion with it are the Churches of the simple and superstitious masses of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant and, speaking of pre-Bolshevik times, of Russia. Their travel-weary pilgrims have always looked for visible and tangible satisfaction of their devotion in the form of imposing offices and splendid ceremonies, when they could lose themselves in awed contemplation or abandon themselves to fervent exaltation. Hence the long night services and thronging processions, the studded tiaras and costly vestments of the Patriarchs and their Synods, the huge glittering chandeliers and coloured globes, the richly carved iconostases, the precious vessels and innumerable ikons. And nowhere can the grandeur and the splendour of Eastern Christianity be better understood than at Christmas in Constantine's Church at Bethlehem.

The climax of all the great Christmas processions is the descent to the Grotto, where is the Shrine of the Nativity. The Grotto is actually the largest of a series of caves, such as are commonly met with in the Judæan Hills ; indeed, there is a similar series under the south wall of the Nave, but these have been accorded no special significance. The remainder of the series to which the Grotto belongs are comprised within the Latin sphere and have been converted into chapels—one is venerated as the cell in which St. Jerome wrote the Vulgate—and they are separated from the Grotto by a door in which a hole is shown that we are told was caused by a bullet fired during one of the many, and often sanguinary, disputes that used to occur between the clergy of the different rites. As a consequence of these incessant disturbances, the Turks stationed a Moslem guard permanently in the Grotto, and when the British forces occupied the Town, the Turkish sentry was formally relieved by a British guard—surely a unique event in the history of war !

The Shrine itself is in the form of a small apse in two sections, the upper constituting the altar, on which the ikons and other appurtenances of the officiant are placed, while below is the silver

Star, inscribed 'Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus est,' which marks the traditional spot of the Nativity. It was the theft of this Star by the Orthodox, on account of its Latin inscription, that was a contributory cause of the Crimean War. Adjacent is the altar of the Manger, which is exclusively in the possession of the Latins, for whom it was secured through the influence of the Emperor Napoleon III.

Here is the hallowed spot that for sixteen hundred years has been associated in the minds of Christian men and women with the birth of the Saviour of the world. True there can be no proof that verily here were the Stable and the Manger; for the historicity of the Holy Places does not go back beyond the fourth century when the pious and politic Constantine, wishing to give tangible confirmation of the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, determined and enshrined actual sites to mark the scenes connected with the life on earth of the Head of that religion. Nor does that matter; what is of such solemn moment is that here are the few inches of the earth's surface that countless millions have gazed upon, have knelt by and touched with their lips, and have poured out their prayers before, as being the spot where took place the most blessed incident in the history of the world.

Such thoughts may be with the worshipper of to-day, no less than with the pilgrim of the Dark Ages or the mailed warrior of the Crusades. Indeed, to have taken part in the Christmas Eve service at Bethlehem is an experience that cannot be forgotten. After circumambulating the Nave, the procession descends. Behind the lines of Bishops, Priests and acolytes presses the crowd, East mingling with West, each bearing a lighted candle. The confined space of the Grotto becomes packed and heavy with the smoke from the oil lamps and from the candles. The officiating clergy in their festal robes make their obeisance before the Star, while the deacons chant and the thurifers swing the censers, and the old story of God's greatest gift to Man is read. The procession then files out again and one by one the congregation in their turn kneel to kiss the Star and to pray for the Christmas blessing of peace and goodwill.

Far into the night the offices succeed each other, and the crowds come and go to-day as it has been for so many centuries and as it will be till the end of time. And below in the fields shepherds still watch their flocks beneath the stars, and merchants from the East are winding their way.



*CAROL.*

IN Christian lands from shore to shore  
 The Mass of Christ is sung once more.  
 With sacred Bread and hallowed Cup  
 The faithful offer homage up.  
 Salute ye all this Holy Morn  
 For Christ, the Son of God, is born !

Gaspar, Balthazar, Melchior  
 Kneel at His mangered crib once more  
 With frankincense and myrrh and gold,  
 For unto them the angel told  
 ' Salute ye all this Holy Morn  
 For Christ, the Son of God, is born ! '

Then follow we the flaming star  
 That calls the faithful from afar  
 To where the Prince of Peace doth rest  
 Upon His Virgin Mother's breast.  
 Salute ye all this Holy Morn  
 For Christ, the Son of God, is born !

IN Christian lands from shore to shore  
 The Mass of Christ is sung once more,  
 With grateful hearts we offer up  
 The sacred Bread and hallowed Cup.  
 Salute ye all this Holy Morn  
 For Christ, the Son of God, is born !

HESPER LE GALLIENNE.

## *WITH THE GUN IN EGYPT.*

BY C. S. JARVIS.

### *II. THE DESERTS.*

THE difference between shooting in the deserts of Egypt and in the Nile Valley is that there is no need to maintain that attitude of pretending to be on duty and hard at work when one is returning in a car, loaded up with birds and gun-cases, from a long day in the duck butts and on the snipe marshes. Actually, the officials of Egypt are not an overworked class, for office hours are from 8.30 a.m. to 1.30, with innumerable and ever-recurring holidays due to a complexity of religions ; but it has always been the custom in the country since the days of Cromer to keep up the fiction, regardless of outward evidence, that one is desperately hard at work, despite the fact that one realises one is not taking in anybody except oneself.

Thus an Inspector of Finance, with boots covered in mud and duck feathers clinging to every portion of his apparel, will sink into a chair at the Club and explain that he has had a most trying day dealing with a discrepancy in accounts at Ayyat ; or one will stumble over a pile of snipe in the hall and be informed by the person responsible that he had to go off to Damietta in a hurry to look for a suitable area in the marshes for an Infantry Brigade camp. One of the reasons why the British prove such successful administrators is that they adopt the customs and manners of the country they serve, and the British, being a thorough race, do not believe in half-measures—the only trouble is, they do not lie nearly so convincingly as the Oriental they strive to imitate.

In the keen, clear atmosphere of the deserts there is no need for this sort of thing, as the only people one could tell the tale to would be the Arabs, who are an economical race and who would be shocked at this waste of good mendacity when it so obviously fails of its purpose. Besides, if it so happens that one's job lies in the desert the end amply justifies the means, for it is while one is on hunting and shooting expeditions that one discovers and sees for oneself all the things worth while. Mere inspecting for the sake of inspecting will always take one along the recognised

camel or car tracks or to police posts where one is expected and the Oriental 'eye-wash' has been so applied that the most disorganised show has the appearance of being thoroughly on the alert and correct in every detail. It is when one gets up in the hills after game that one comes across possibly a Roman water supply that with some repairs might irrigate a few odd acres of land, a smuggler's cache of hashish, or some old Arab with a tale of grave injustice who has been systematically shooed away from every police post for fear that he might make unpleasant disclosures. In fact, if it is desired to soothe an uneasy conscience, it is quite easy to make out such a case for shooting that really one should do nothing else, and going to the office in the morning almost amounts to neglect of duty.

The big game of Egypt are few and far between, but this was not always the case, as, judging from the bas reliefs on ancient tombs, all the desert antelopes swarmed on either side of the Nile, for the carvings always depict the oryx and addax being brought forward as gifts on every State occasion. It must have been glorious to hold a responsible position in those spacious and generous days, as at the slightest excuse the whole countryside arose as one man and carried provender of every description to the house.

The oryx, that glorious beast with the long, rapier-like horns, has not been seen in the deserts of Egypt for over sixty years and, though there were a few addax in the vicinity of Sollum near the Italian-Cyrenaican border up till 1914, it is feared that the Army Light Cars wiped out the few survivors during the War. They are a heavy antelope about the size of a donkey and, unlike the gazelle, do not have a chance when chased by a car.

The two gazelle, the Dorcas and the Loder, still exist, but I believe that the Dorcas has had his species subdivided and that the correct name for the type of animal that is found in the Libyan and Sinai deserts is the Isabelline. It is a thousand pities to shoot such a glorious and beautiful little animal, but unfortunately there is a certain type of murderer, usually of the Dago fraternity, who derives vast amusement from running these poor little creatures down in high-powered cars and shooting them with shot-guns. The Isabelline is still quite plentiful, and in 1935 I saw a herd of fifteen near the Wadi Natrun about forty miles from Cairo. With the new desert road that has been recently constructed from Cairo to Alexandria via the Wadi Natrun, I am afraid their future is not a very bright one. The Loder, who is a slightly taller beast and

affects an 'off-white' colour instead of the dun of the Dorcas or Isabelline, is not so plentiful, and I have seen them only three times in the desert near the Baharia Oasis.

The ibex or wild goat in small numbers still holds its own in the high mountains of Southern Sinai and east of the Nile in the Red Sea district. They were very nearly exterminated in 1919, owing to the fact that every Arab in Egypt managed to obtain a Service rifle with unlimited ammunition. A good number of these have been seized, and the remainder, owing to the Arab's inability to keep anything clean and cared for—not even himself—are now probably useless and *mastaralsh* (not working); and this is all to the good.

Shooting of ibex, if properly conducted, does very little harm, for one naturally shoots the largest male with the heaviest head, and as the ibex is very much a sultan with harem ideas it may possibly lead to an increase of the species if a jealous old warrior with five or six wives is removed and some of the younger bloods with insignificant heads get a chance. I have watched herds of ibex through the glasses and the young undergraduate class have a very poor time. If a love-sick youth dares to have a word with a young lady of his own age he receives a buffet in the ribs from a huge pair of scythe-like horns that knocks all the matrimonial desires out of him for the rest of the week.

Ibex-hunting is by no means easy, as it means meeting them on their own ground, 5,000 feet up in the wildest and craggiest granite mountains. Both the hearing and eyesight of these wild goats are entirely efficient and their sense of smell is phenomenal. If the wind is right they can scent a man a mile away, and our scent must be not only extremely potent but also indescribably unpleasant, for when an ibex winds a human he does not pause to think, but is off in a flash at full gallop and will not stop till he has put a range of mountains between himself and the reason of the stench.

The ibex country is some distance away from civilisation, whether one selects the southern Qalala mountains on the Red Sea or one of the big peaks in Sinai, and this means that the sportsman must spend at least two days getting to his camp. The actual hunt consists of starting a four- to five-thousand-foot climb in the very early hours of the morning and travelling all day over the roughest and steepest going imaginable, with the prospect of spotting a sizable head the other side of a vast and deep gorge

just before sunset, with insufficient time to get within shot before dark.

In Sinai I have made some efforts to preserve the ibex by employing Arab keepers who are supposed to watch certain mountains. Only a limited amount of success attended my efforts, as the Arab is not the right type for this particular calling and seems to think he has acquired privileges which entitle him and his relatives to shoot. It is not very easy to keep a watch on a dishonest keeper when his beat is two hundred miles away in the heart of the most desolate country, and the system I employed was to sack a man if any sportsman came back and reported no game whatsoever in that keeper's preserve. This might possibly savour of gross unfairness in some cases; but the Arab has been brought up in the tradition of injustice for many centuries, and a little thing like being sacked for something that is not his fault gives a delightful hint of the good old Turkish days when a man had his head chopped off if the Pasha found his features displeasing.

Some years ago a friend of mine asked if I could arrange an ibex-hunting trip for him, and luckily at that particular time my keepers had reported a large herd of the animals with at least three good heads in a moderately small mountain close to the Monastery of St. Catherine. We set off together, and at the opening of the gorge leading to the Monastery were met by the keepers, who told us excitedly that the ibex were in position that morning and were most unlikely to move. We were staying that night in the Monastery and unfortunately my friend was a person of some eminence, and still more unfortunately the monks are social climbers, or rather official climbers—by no means the same thing. As we got out of the cars at the foot of the Monastery walls there was a deafening, ear-splitting detonation—the monks, in honour of our arrival, had fired a seventeenth-century culverin loaded to the muzzle with blasting powder, and before we could stop them had fired six more. The frightful din rolling and reverberating round those bare granite mountains was more shattering to the nerves than any intensive bombardment I met during the War, and my friend turned to me and said, sadly, 'There go our ibex,' and he was right; we never saw a sign of them, and I imagine the whole census of ibex population must have been bunched together in a frightened herd at the extreme apex of the Peninsula.

It was entirely my fault, as I should have remembered that was one of the monks' funny little ways to welcome their guests

with a salvo of this description. The man who fires these guns is an old Arab of the Gebaliya tribe and in my opinion is graded top of all the V.C.'s and Iron Cross holders as the bravest man in the world. The culverins are of great age and are eaten up with rust; they are tied to home-made gun carriages with lengths of telephone wire, and this unrecognised and unhonoured hero packs them to the muzzle with black powder and then puts an ordinary match to the touch-hole without a thought of the fact that he might be in the middle of the Hereafter in half a second.

One of the most satisfactory things about the ibex in Egypt is the sanctuary that has been formed in a small wadi some thirty miles south of Cairo. This wadi or mountain valley has a tiny trickle of water in it, a most unusual thing in this very inhospitable desert, and Prince Kamel el Din Hussein some thirty years ago discovered that certain female ibex frequented the wadi, being visited in the rutting season in the autumn by many of the males from the Red Sea Mountains. He at once acquired rights over the wadi, and an area of forty square miles surrounding it, appointed Albanian keepers, who were very much more effective than my Arabs, and used it as his preserve. The ibex flourished and increased in numbers, and on the Prince's death the wadi was taken over by the Government as a game sanctuary. The remarkable thing about the wadi is that not only are the females quite fearless of man—this is more or less understandable, as they are always seeing humans—but the males who visit them also realise immediately they arrive that they are safe. They come in from the desolate mountains a hundred miles away to the South where every man is an enemy, and see the wadi below with keepers moving about their huts and gardens and a small gas engine pumping water. The valley is haunted by man and all his hated civilisation and horrid scents, but some instinct tells these animals they are safe, so that it is possible to walk up to within thirty yards of six of seven of the wildest and most timid animals in the world and take a close-up photograph; and these same ibex, if they so much as caught a whiff of a human being outside the valley, would run for three hours without stopping. This is a sanctuary in the best sense of the word, as not only is it a safe home for permanent residents but is also recognised as such by visitors, and this is where it differs from all other game preserves. I have been endeavouring to get the Egyptian Government to start an oryx preserve in Sinai, but so far officialdom is so surprised at its success with the

ibex sanctuary that it is afraid to spoil it with another venture which might not prove so satisfactory.

Besides ibex there are a few wild sheep in the Red Sea Mountains, though there is none in Sinai. It was thought also that there was none in the Western or Libyan Desert, which was not remarkable, as there are no mountains sufficiently high to suit the animal, though there was a record that a British coastguard officer had seen one west of the Oasis of Dakhla. It was one of the queer anomalies of Egypt that coastguard officers used to function in deserts four hundred miles from the sea. In course of time, as no more were ever seen, it was thought that the coastguard, with his eye trained to gaze over wastes of sea and not wastes of sand, had been mistaken; and then Sir Ahmed Hassanein, the Egyptian explorer, discovered the Oasis of Owenat near the Sudan border and overlooking it a vast solitary massif of limestone. Round the water-hole at the foot of the mountain were the skeletons and heads of enormous sheep, remains of Arab feasts, and these heads were far larger than anything seen in the Red Sea. It was found that this solitary mountain supports a considerable herd of these animals, and no doubt the coastguard saw some old male who had wandered 300 miles across flat desert in search of adventure.

The non-migratory birds of the desert are various types of sand grouse, the Hey's or Himalaya partridge, the Chikor or red-legged partridge, the lesser bustard, and the humble blue rock pigeon. Among migratory birds may be mentioned all varieties of duck that come in to feed on the marshes of the various oases of the Western Desert both on the outward and inward journeys; the quail, who linger in the scattered patches of desert barley till it is time to depart for Europe; and in the oases of Kharga and Dakhla where the marshes are extensive the snipe may be found in small numbers.

The River Nile appears to be the boundary between Asia and Africa for both fauna and feather. That is to say, the ibex is found in Sinai and the Red Sea, but not west of the Nile; the leopard, though scarce, frequents Sinai, but in the Western Desert the cheetah takes its place; the Hey's or Chikor partridges are common in most valleys with a water supply in Sinai and the Red Sea, but in the West no specimens have ever been found, and the only partridge in the Western Desert is the Barbary, a few of which have been seen in the rocky scarp south of Mersa Matruh; whilst the sand grouse of the deserts west of the Nile

is the ordinary spotted or Senegal variety, but in Sinai both the Imperial and Coroneted are common, but the Senegal extremely rare.

This more or less hard-and-fast rule as to the dividing line between Africa and Asia observed by birds and beasts merely obscures the issue as to what actually is the boundary between the two continents. I have always held the view that as Egypt cannot be both in Africa and Asia, the boundary must of necessity be the frontier between Sinai and Palestine—namely, Rafa on the Mediterranean to the head of the Gulf of Akaba. This, with some variations from time to time, has been the Egyptian frontier from about fifteen hundred years before Christ and holds good to-day. The authorities, however, when the Suez Canal is discussed, talk freely of the African and Asian banks, and every Frenchman in the Canal Company believes firmly that he has stepped into Asia when he crosses the waterway, regardless of the fact that it is an entirely artificial feature and did not exist prior to 1869. And now we find that fauna and feather, who have probably far sounder instincts, regard a third line, the Nile, as the boundary; and in the existing confusion, who can say whether they are right or wrong? The recognised cartographers of the world refuse to do anything about publishing new editions of maps till they hear officially whether Irak is to be spelt as Irak with a k or Iraq with a q, and so the confusion is likely to last for some time.

Sand-grouse shooting is most exciting and thrilling, and as it takes place in the early morning when the desert is at its best it is a fascinating sport. The only thing that spoils it is the thought that one probably shoots a far greater number than one really requires of a most attractive little bird, for the sand grouse, though quite edible, is very far from being a luxury. His life is far too strenuous and his fare too spartan to make him succulent and tender and he possesses a skin that, if not shot-proof, is most definitely tooth-proof.

Sand grouse come in from the camel tracks about an hour after sun-up and choose as their watering-places a deserted spot on the Nile if the river happens to be in the vicinity of their particular part of the desert, or to one of the various water-holes that occur in Sinai and the Western Desert. A very favourite haunt of these birds is the outlying pools of the oases of Kharga, Dakhla, and Baharia, but the drawback to sand-grouse shooting is that one is never quite certain at which pool they will drink, as they



very wisely change their *rendezvous* every morning. One takes up one's stand in a hide of palm branches by the side of a pool at which they watered yesterday and spends two hours watching flight after flight of the birds dropping in to some pond half a mile away. If, however, one is not a confirmed bird-slaughterer one cannot call the morning wasted, for one is certain to have a flight or two within shot of one's hide, and the beauty of the desert in the slanting rays of the early morning sun makes up for the lack of sport.

One's pool is probably a stretch of intensely blue water which contrasts most strikingly with the yellow sand dune that is encroaching upon it at the far side, and away across the undulating dun of the sand and clear cut against the primrose morning sky are clumps of artistically arranged palm trees. Considering what a very haphazard arborist the Arab is, and his entirely natural contempt for anything beautiful, except a camel and a woman, it is remarkable how he so arranges his clumps of palm trees that the most skilled landscape gardener could not improve upon the grouping. It almost suggests that Dame Nature, being alive to his limitations, takes an active hand in the matter and gives some assistance.

The sand grouse come in from their feeding-grounds on the desert camel tracks, and one is first aware of their approach by their high-pitched chuckling note from which they derive their Arabic name of 'qattar'; then one sees, high up, a line of tiny dots against the sky that very rapidly become larger, and a moment later, considerably earlier than one expects it, there is a rush of wings and a pack of from twenty to forty sand grouse shoot past one's hide. If one fires there is a hurried beating of wings and the covey swerve upwards and disappear as quickly as they came into view. If not they circle round the pool three or four times and then alight, but apparently they take one short sip of water only and in a second are off again. They carry out their drinking so rapidly that at first I was under the impression that they did it on the wing.

The sand grouse is not a grouse as his name suggests, but is more closely allied to the pigeon family, but he is fitted out with small feathered feet that rather suggest the Highland bird. The feathers on the leg, however, are the only part about him that resembles the grouse and his meat, though palatable, is more like that of a very tough wood-pigeon.

All the varieties are extremely beautifully coloured, the cock of the Spotted or Senegal having a bright lemon throat, whilst the hen affects a yellow dun colouring closely mottled with dark brown. The Imperial that is found only in Eastern Sinai is a wonderful bird with a very conspicuous dark breast, whilst every feather on his back, flanks, and wings, bears an intricate and marvellous pattern in yellow and various shades of rich brown.

I nearly became quite famous in the ornithological world by obtaining on the shores of the Gulf of Akaba an exceedingly rare variety supposed to be the Close Barred sand grouse. I sent it to the Cairo Zoo, but before it could be identified definitely the cat ate it, and I have always had the feeling that the cat might have waited an hour or so and allowed me to obtain whatever kudos one ought to get for shooting a rare bird.

Needless to say, the high deserts are not good holding ground for duck, though as a matter of fact these birds during the migration will come down on any tiny pool that may form near a spring or by a sudden fall of heavy rain. Once I saw a flight of eleven magnificent drake mallard waddling about on the dry sand miles from water, and on another occasion, when I dammed the Wadi El Arish, a hundred or more teal and widgeon came down to disport themselves in the water before it soaked away all too rapidly. This goes to prove that the migration of duck does not only follow the waterway of the Nile as one might suppose, but takes place across both Sinai and the Western or Libyan Desert as well. This latter I proved by finding the dried bodies of many duck under crags on every rocky hill some two hundred miles west of Dakhla Oasis and over four hundred miles from the Nile. They were obviously the remains of exhausted migrants who had been unable to continue the flight and had crawled under the stones to die.

The four big oases of the Western Desert—Kharga, Dakhla, Baharia, and Farafra—used to provide the most excellent duck shooting, but when first I knew these ‘Islands of the Blessed,’ as the Romans called them, it was in the days immediately after the War when all firearms were prohibited and there were miles of malaria-ridden marshes that have now been drained. Things have changed for the worse or, to be more exact, the better since then and I believe the sport obtainable now can best be described as uncertain and intermittent.

A very amusing episode occurred at Beris, the southernmost village in the big Oasis of Kharga, when I was Governor there

sixteen years ago. I had gone there on inspection, and owing to some contingency, probably the high temperature, we were out of meat and it meant goat's flesh for dinner unless I could obtain a duck. I went out with the gun, but as luck would have it duck were very short in the market that evening and I was about to return with an empty bag when I spotted a flight of seven pintail on a pool. The pintail is one of the wariest of the duck family, so I crawled right into a patch of reeds and crouched in the mud while my two newly enlisted gun-boys went round to drive the birds over my head. All went well at first—the duck rose and came straight for me, but then, just before they came within shot, they swerved away to the right and disappeared. The reason for their behaviour was a particularly silly-looking individual in a white *galabiya*, who had arrived after I had taken up my position and who was standing bolt upright close behind me.

With a snort of exasperation, I stalked off in the direction the duck had taken, located them again half a mile away and arranged another drive, to have it upset from precisely the same cause with the same individual playing the leading part. With a still louder snort and boiling with rage I walked another half-mile, sent out the gun-boys, and lay down under a high bank. The duck once again came straight for me, to swing off at the last moment as my pertinacious friend of the inane smile came strolling towards me along the top of the bank. He held out his hand to greet me as I rose from my lair smothered with mud, and I fetched him the most glorious resounding box on the ear.

‘What was that for?’ he asked, in pained surprise.

‘For deliberately driving those duck away on three occasions,’ I snarled.

‘Duck?’ he said; ‘I haven’t seen any duck. I was just following you around to see why you kept lying down in the mud.’

It is so difficult to convince the Oriental that the English as a nation are not mad when definite proof of their insanity is constantly provided by such actions as lying almost prostrate in the mud for no reason. To explain that one was trying to get a shot at a flying duck would merely have aggravated the situation and confirmed suspicions of deranged mentality, for what man in his senses fires a cartridge at flying birds when with a little trouble the contents of two barrels can be put into thirty duck sitting still on the water?

A bird that is fairly plentiful over all the Western Desert and

Sinai is the Lesser Bustard, but personally I have never been able to bring myself to shoot one. The chief reason for this is that one always sees them in couples and I cannot bear the thought of breaking up a pair of birds when they are of those varieties that mate for life. It is said they are the most delicious eating, but the only one I ever tasted was shot with a rifle by one of my Squadron of Yeomanry during the South African War and, though we were in a state of semi-starvation at that particular time—in fact I never had a square meal during the whole of that war—I was not vastly impressed with the meat. Probably our method of cooking it was at fault, but I have never had any burning desire to repeat the dish.

In both the West and in Sinai the Beduin hunt the bustard with falcons, though the practice seems to be fast dying out, for very few Arabs can now afford the luxury of hawking. The birds used are the goshawk, the peregrine, and more particularly the Saker, a falcon a trifle larger than the peregrine that is found in North Africa and Eastern Europe. I once went hawking with some Arab friends and we set forth in the most derelict and overloaded Ford I have ever seen. The party consisted of seven, including myself, and mixed up with the tightly packed humanity in the car were six hawks, a Saluki dog with mange, and two very noisy cockerels in a small bag. I was not quite certain what part the chickens were going to play in the day's proceedings, but whatever it was they strongly disapproved of the whole entertainment and squawked loudly whenever the dog or one of the party trod on the bag, and we did it often.

We flushed our first bustard after about an hour's run, the car stopped with a jerk that would have sent myself and the O.C. Hawks, hawks and all, through the wind-screen if the car had been provided with one, and we jumped out and loosed a falcon. The bustard made off with his lumbering, heavy flight and the falcon, after a moment's hesitation caused by loud squawks from the cockerels who were being trodden on for the twentieth time as the party scrambled out of the car, flew upwards till he was over the bustard. Immediately the bustard realised his danger he dropped like a stone into a scrub bush, and my Arab friend then explained to me that the bustard had a very remarkable form of defence and that it would be interesting to see if the falcon, who was young and untrained, would be cute enough to avoid it. I could not quite understand from the Sheikh's Arabic what

this defence was, and when I had a practical demonstration was not surprised that I had failed to grasp the revolting details. To be exact, the bustard crouched with his tail spread out fanwise, and at the moment when the falcon came swooping on to him he was apparently afflicted with a violent attack of diarrhoea and the whole discharge went into the hawk's face. It was a very considerable discharge, too, and the young entry had all his hunting instincts knocked out of him in a flash. He beat his way rapidly upwards into the air and evidently contemplated resigning from his position as a trained hawk on the spot and taking to the wilds again, and it was at this stage of the proceedings that I discovered the part the chickens were to play. My Arab friend, seeing his falcon disappearing into the blue, rushed for the bag, pulled out a protesting bird, and holding it by its legs swung it round his head. The cockerel let fly the most heart-rending shrieks, and the falcon, checking its flight, suddenly swung round and came back with such a desperate swoop that the old man had only just time to pop the bird back into the bag when the hawk was on him. Whatever the falcon's opinions about bustards might be, he had no doubt in his mind that chickens were not only extremely good to eat but were also irreproachable so far as their table manners were concerned.

This ended my day's hawking, for we saw no more bustard, but I did not feel that my time had been wasted, as I had seen for myself a most novel and effective defence put up by an apparently harmless bird.

*LONDON INTERLUDE.*

BY NATALA KOREL.

THEY were three of the dirtiest children I have ever seen. My first inclination was to give them some coppers and walk on, but there was something about those delightfully grimy faces, crowned with matted hair, that made me stop and answer their questions. I had just come out of an art gallery in Bond Street where the pictures of Pissarro, Picasso, Renoir and others had suffused and delighted my senses, and I hardly noticed the incongruous small group of the three urchins—in fact, I would not have noticed them at all had I not felt a tug at the sleeve of my coat.

‘Wot’s in there?’

His hand still tugged unconsciously at my sleeve. He must have been about ten, and the girl about the same. They were both fairly ragged, but compared with the third, the smallest by far, they were extremely tidy. This baby looked at me very gravely for a second, and then grinned affably, displaying a toothless upper gum. He had reached the age when teeth drop out unawares, but was as unconscious of it as he was of two sockless legs thrust into boots many sizes too large, and what had once been a Norfolk jacket probably worn with an air of superiority by some more fortunate child nearly twice his age.

I tried to look severe, but six eager eyes really wanted to know what was behind that door through which I had just emerged, and I suddenly had a vision of what would happen if I took them in! Who would be the more startled, the semi-intellectual snobs gazing appraisingly if somewhat vacantly at the canvases, or the children themselves who probably thought the door led to a sort of Aladdin’s Cave? I laughed. This was the signal for a positive bombardment of tugs and questions. Their voices were slightly hoarse—the voices of children who live under conditions that encourage permanent colds.

‘Aw, you just come ahrt. Tell us.’

I gently removed his grubby hand and held it in mine. The baby promptly possessed himself of the other one and the girl confronted me with angry eyes.

'I know. You just want ter be narsty. You won't tell.'

I looked down from my far greater height and studied her. This promised to be difficult. The situation was saved for me by the baby, who put his chin on my hand and opened his eyes as wide as possible as he stared up at me.

'Want ter see too,' he said, and grinned again encouragingly.

We were beginning to attract the attention of the passers-by, but I knew how hard it was going to be to get them away from that door. A thought suddenly struck me. Of course they had hoped to find Father Christmas in there, or at least something to do with him. It was just a few weeks before Christmas, and they must have drifted as far as Bond Street, lured by endless stretches of gay shop windows, regardless of the filthy weather or the cold or anything save the wish to see. This was not going to be so difficult after all! I would give them some money, buy them some chocolates and get rid of them. But I was no longer so sure that I wanted to get rid of them. I was beginning to enjoy them!

'What do you think is in there?' I enquired of the big boy.

'We dunno, we wants ter see,' he replied firmly.

'But why just this place?' I argued.

''Cos we thought it looked nice,' said the girl politely.

'They wouldn't let you in,' I said, in order to see what effect this would have. The boy snatched his hand away and thrust it in his pocket.

'Oh,' he said defiantly. 'Why not?'

I pictured him, a square-jawed revolutionary ten years later, saying the same thing with precisely the same expression and intonation. Some employer of the future was not going to have an easy time!

'Because you are all too young, and anyway there are only dull pictures to see. You wouldn't like them even if you did get in.'

They did not want to believe me. They eyed me with obvious distrust, all except the baby who was tired, and leaned against my leg for a little support.

'But we wants ter see pictures.'

The argument promised to be long and heated.

'Yus,' echoed the girl, 'we does.'

'But not that kind,' I persisted. 'You like moving pictures, don't you?'

The boy nodded his head dubiously. 'We do too, but we've

seen those up 'ome. We wants somethink different ter see, that's why we've come 'ere. Are they funny?'

He jerked his head towards the door, and I took the cue.

'Not at all,' I said very definitely. 'They are dull and old——' I had a bright idea, '—and there aren't even any people in them.' I ended triumphantly.

This seemed to have a dampening effect. They were almost incredulous.

'Wot? No fices? Nothink like that?' He seemed crest-fallen.

'Wot is in them then?' This from the girl, who was the most distrusting by far.

'Nothing much at all,' I rejoined lightly. 'Only trees and houses and more trees and things like that.'

I had ruthlessly destroyed their glorious illusions. It was up to me to make amends. That they really believed me I could see by their faces. Suddenly the girl grabbed the baby and turned to the boy.

'Come on, 'Erb, it ain't no use of 'anging abarht 'ere. Let's go.'

I looked at the three pathetic morsels of humanity, and my vague desire to make amends took on definite shape.

'I have a good idea,' I said brightly. 'At least I hope it is. Let's all go and have something to eat and drink, and then you must go home.'

The three stood in front of me blocking up the entire pavement. People passing us had to step off into the gutter to get round us, or squeeze past the window. I waited patiently for them to make up their minds. They surveyed me critically as if to decide whether I was serious or a bit mad or only slightly drunk. It is tragically true of Cockney children that they very rarely have any spontaneous reaction of joy to an unusual suggestion. Their instinct all too often is to think carefully for a few minutes, to detect the 'snag.'

I waited. None of them said a word. I turned on my heel and walked away. They followed slowly, still in silence. I could see them out of the tail of my eye as they followed close on my heels. At the bottom of the street I turned.

'Hullo! I'm glad you decided to come too. I'm hungry and thirsty and want tea and lots of cakes, and it's awful to have all that alone.'

Whether it was the thought of mountains of cake and lakes of



tea, or just adventure that swung the balance in my favour, I never knew. They had made up their minds. The baby once more clutched my hand, and we set off in the direction of Piccadilly to one of those palaces erected to the glorification of mass food consumption. They had probably hung round the doors of this place often enough, watching well-dressed, clean, sleek children going in and out, not with any envy gnawing at their little hearts, but a kind of dumb curiosity shadowed with a certain amount of pleasure. Their lot in life was certainly not anything like that, but theirs not to question why . . .

We entered proudly, and ran the gauntlet of hundreds of pairs of outraged eyes. We kept very close together, like a tiny flock of black sheep braving an endless sea of fleecy white ones. The children's eyes were in grave danger of falling right out of their heads, but no sound passed their lips. I had a fleeting idea that our entrance would be barred, but a good fur coat is proof against more than the cold, and certain hats have a way of sitting on your head that makes you feel you can defy kings on their thrones. In we sailed, the four of us, and were soon installed at a table that gave us all an excellent view of the orchestra, and the skimmed cream of outer suburbia sipping tea, surrounded with Christmas parcels.

I took off my gloves without so much as a look at the battery of simpering glances, and started a serious and prolonged conference with my guests.

'Well, children, what is it to be?'

They had not yet found their voices, and when they did, it was to speak in awed whispers.

'Come along, Herbert, you are the eldest, so you can choose first. What would you like? Tea? No, that's too dull. What about some hot chocolate?' I looked at the other two. 'For all of us, yes?'

I was wrong.

'No, thank you,' said the girl. 'I want ice-cream.'

I shivered. Ice-cream! Well, it was their party, they could freeze if they wanted to. I looked at Herbert. His face wore a worried look, as if he had not been given sufficient time to solve this major problem.

'Well, Herbert? Ice-cream?'

The waitress had sidled up to us reluctantly. She glanced at me sideways, and her already tilted nose rose a bit higher.

The baby still held my hand fast, and I released it to try to take his hair out of his eyes, but he grabbed it feverishly again.

'Herbert, what do you think he would like? May he have an ice too?' I enquired.

Herbert collected his thoughts and relinquished his personal problem for a second.

'Spect so, if 'e wants one.'

The waitress shifted from one hip to the other. I took the situation in hand.

'Hands up for ices,' I said firmly.

Three hands went up and then as quickly down again, as they remembered where they were.

I looked at the waitress. 'Three ices, mixed. Lots of bread and butter, brown and white, lots of cakes, all sorts, and China tea for me.'

She departed briskly, and as she passed down the room I noticed she received sympathetic smiles from the others.

While we were waiting, I determined to find out something about my waifs. They had all put their hands on the table, and left large black smudges on the cloth.

I looked at the girl, absorbed in her surroundings.

'What's your name?' I asked.

'Maria.'

'Thank you, Maria. And what is your name?' I pulled the baby's hair.

Maria chimed in. 'E ain't nothink. 'E's just Tom.'

Tom, apparently used to being nothing, did not reply. He had been staring at the orchestra, at the moment having a rest, and the warmth of the room was making his nose run. He wiped it on the sleeve of his jacket which kept on falling right over his hand, being far too long. Then he got tired of doing that, and I hastily gave him my handkerchief before he requisitioned the tablecloth. He sniffed at it, and then looked at me, then sniffed it again, and the grin that I was beginning to love covered his face. Maria snatched it away from him and sniffed too, then handed it to Herbert with the remark, 'Coo, stink.' He put it in his pocket, and just when Tom was about to claim it in no uncertain terms, the waitress arrived with our order, and we all settled down to do full justice to it.

The influence of the ices was warming! They thawed to such purpose that they started clamouring for more. I was afraid they

would all be sick on the spot, but there was nothing for it but to order more. Two ices and an orangeade each, bread and cakes, cakes and bread! I was sure of disaster if we stayed longer.

Out in the street once more, I felt much safer. I shepherded them across the street to the tube station, with the intention of finding out where they lived and sending them home.

'Where do you live, Herbert?'

This was a mistake. I saw Maria pull his sleeve, and he was immediately on the defensive.

'Wot's that got ter do wi' you?' he enquired shortly.

'Nothing at all, except that I want to buy you tickets for the train. Or do you go by 'bus?' I smiled at Maria.

I still think that child must have lived in an atmosphere of cruel mistrust.

'Well, if yer wants ter know, we lives at 'Arringay,' said Herbert reluctantly.

I was sure this visit to the West End was an escapade, and said as much. Herbert shifted uneasily.

'And what if Tom's mother is looking for him?' I went on. 'You had better take him back as quickly as you can. Anyway, where did you get the money to come all this way?'

I eyed the culprits severely. To my surprise, Maria owned up.

'Well, yer see, Ma guv me shoppin' money and I met 'Erb wiv Tom and we done this instead, see?'

I thought grimly of Ma, and what she would do when the child returned.

'How much did she give you?' I asked.

'A bob—a 'ole bob!'

It was as if the enormity of her crime had just dawned on her, and she started to sniff. I gave her the money and told her to buy the things on the way back. I left them on the escalator, armed with tickets and enough money to buy what they wanted for Christmas. The last I saw of them was Herbert, counting the coins as if his life depended on it, and Maria dragging Tom on to the moving stairway in a manner guaranteed to break his neck the quickest way possible.

Did I say that was the last I saw of them? . . .

Half an hour later, I myself went down the same escalator, and found them trying to walk up the one that was moving down!

They saw me, and earned my respect for not trying to run away. Quite affably they greeted me, and I made no comment. Tom,

hugely delighted, rushed to grab my hand, and we all went on to the platform to wait for the train.

It was Maria who once more surprised me, by begging to see me again. I had not thought of that, of course. But why not?

In two short hours I felt I had started to know these children. I wanted to know them better. I would certainly see them again. I made them promise to get permission from their mothers to come to my rooms the following week, and I would take them to Kensington Gardens to sail boats on the Round Pond. When I got out of the train at South Kensington, I was rewarded with a genuine smile from Maria.

Many times, during the week that followed, I found myself wondering if they would come. I hoped so. On the appointed day, I bought a large bag of buns to feed the mews that find their way to the Round Pond in the winter. I waited.

Two o'clock . . . half-past . . . three o'clock . . . half-past . . . a very timid knock on my door. I opened, and my heart sank. There, standing on the threshold, were three of the cleanest children you could see! I looked at their faces in dismay. Herbert's hair was plastered to look like patent leather, his cheeks shone with soap. I looked closer—yes, even his ears were unnaturally clean. My eyes wandered to Maria, and she too shone from every pore, her hair tied up with a suspiciously new piece of baby-ribbon, evidently bought with some of the money I had given her.

And Tom? Yes, he too had been mercilessly scrubbed, but heaven be praised, revolt must have broken out before they got to his ears—they were gloriously black. I could have hugged him for that, but he did not give me time; he marched in and clasped me round both knees. I hoped all this menacing cleanliness would wear off after a short while, and their unnatural silence with it. I was wrong once more. The silence was not due to that, and it was Tom who divulged what the others feared to broach.

'Arry come wiv us,' he beamed, dragging me to the door.

I looked questioningly at the others. Maria nudged Herbert, who nudged back, trying to make her speak. She suddenly burst out with a flood of explanation.

'Yer see, it were like this 'ere. We told 'im abarht yer and 'e said it weren't true. 'Erb fought 'im fer that, but 'e still stuck that it weren't true, and then we 'ad a ideah, we show 'im the 'andkerchief wot you 'ad full of stink, but all 'e said were that

we'd stole it or fahnd it, so 'Erb punched 'im fer that, and we left 'im. Then Tom 'ere, like the squirt 'e is, told 'Arry we 'ad money from yer, and show 'im some, and then he 'ad ter berlieve it, and 'e said 'e'd tell Ma and 'Erbert's Ma and 'is own Ma if we didn't bring 'im wiv us, so yer see we 'ad ter, now 'adn't we ?'

'But I told you to get permission from your mothers before coming here to-day,' I argued. 'I should send you all home at once.'

I managed not to smile. Herbert looked as if he had taken a sudden decision to commit murder, and grinding his teeth he said to Maria: 'There y'are! I told yer 'Arry comin' 'ad ter muck up everything,' and he resolutely made for the door.

I, being nearer, got there first, and decided to save Harry and prevent the slaughter. I saw him sitting on the stairs, about half-way down. He stood up and looked sheepishly at me. He was much too fat for his ten or twelve years, and I expected the buttons to pop off his clothes as he stood breathing rather hard, unable to find anything to say.

'Come along, Harry,' I said. 'We are going to the Round Pond, and I'd like you to come with us.'

He shambled past me into the room and was greeted with scorn.

'There y'are, smarty. See? She is 'er.' And Maria pointed at me as I put on my hat and coat. Tom came and rubbed his face on the fur and his blue eyes met mine in a troubled gaze.

'Let's send 'im 'ome,' he said indistinctly, through gums that had lost two more teeth since I had seen him last. 'We don' want ter bovver wiv 'im,' he continued persuasively, 'do we? We fahnd yer, and we wants ter keep yer—fer us.'

This was endorsed spontaneously by Maria and Herbert, who stood eyeing Harry with extreme disfavour. I felt sorry for him. After all, he was entitled to be a doubting Thomas under the circumstances, and it was a pretty safe guess that later he would be made to pay in full for his unwelcome presence. Probably the Round Pond, boats, birds, and buns would solve the difficulty and wipe out any differences, at least until they all got home again. I gave Herbert the buns to carry, and firmly opened the door. . . . By the time we got to the 'bus-stop, all that seemed to matter was, who would sail the boats first and who feed the birds. They argued all the way, and regarded me as a sort of referee. . . .

'Tom didn't ought ter sail a boat, did 'e, Miss?' from Maria.

'I don't see why not,' I retorted. 'I can help him.'

'Neither didn't 'e ought ter feed birds. 'E carn't chuck 'igh enough, can 'e, Miss?' from Herbert.

'We'll see what he feels like,' I replied. 'He might be able to throw quite high enough.'

'Wot? 'E feel like? 'E don't never feel nothink. 'E just is.'

I seemed to remember a somewhat similar remark about him before. I looked at him, sitting quietly beside me, but he seemed to have heard nothing. He stared ecstatically in front of him, looking like an exceedingly mortal cherub.

'Tom is going to do exactly what he likes,' I said.

This seemed to end the argument, and they spent the rest of the ride discussing the speeds of 'buses and trams, and why they go faster than horses.

Mercifully the day was unusually mild for that time of year, and there was quite a lot of activity at the Round Pond. For a while my four stood and watched the proceedings. They were a silent little group, in sharp contrast to the children all around, both in appearance and behaviour. They seemed not to hear all the shouting of the others, in fact they were oblivious of the presence of anybody at all. They concentrated all their attention on the boats, sailing gaily along, or sinking rapidly—much to the loud chagrin of the owners.

Suddenly one tiny yacht skimmed across and grounded at the spot nearest Herbert's feet. There was an immediate rush, and they were surrounded by a dozen or more triumphant youngsters, all grabbing at it at the same time. I watched to see what they would do. Herbert, galvanised into action, bent down and picked it up. There was an instant rush, and a dozen voices yelled for it. That seemed to break the ice. By tacit consent they were amalgamated into the group, and I was left alone with Tom. There is no class distinction among sportsmen!

Tom and I chose a boat, and retired to a less inhabited piece of shore, to start sailing in earnest. He showed no inclination to play with the others. We were sufficient unto ourselves, absorbed in our craft, on which we loaded as much gravel cargo as we dared, before pushing it off to a foreign land.

It must have been nearly an hour later that he suddenly lost interest in the game.

'I'm most 'ungry,' he said.

He was not in the least petulant or pressing. It was a state

ment of fact, and my conscience leaped accordingly. He had probably said it precisely like that many a time in his baby life, without any result. He did not seem to expect anything to happen about it at all. I suddenly remembered the buns we had brought for the birds and not yet used, and looked across for Herbert, who had been entrusted with them. There was no sign of him. The other children all seemed to be there, but my three had vanished. I looked wildly round, through the trees, down the Broad Walk . . . and there, on a bench, were the miscreants gobbling up the buns. I grabbed Tom, telling him to walk very quietly like me, and we made a circuit round the back of the bench like two dark conspirators. They suspected nothing, and went on chewing merrily.

I heard Harry say, 'Lumme, fancy wantin' ter give these 'ere ter birds! She must be barmy!'

Maria started to champion me valiantly, but blew half the currants out of her mouth in the attempt, so gave it up.

Tom's eyes were shining with joy. He had forgotten his hunger and pressed his finger tightly to his lips in an effort to silence his feet!

'Ha!' I said, in a loud voice.

The effect was electric. All chewing stopped, and they turned round, cheeks bulging with bun. Harry looked like a very inflated balloon, and it was all I could do not to burst out laughing. Instead, I strode to the tell-tale bag still open on the seat, and took possession of it. Thank heaven there was one whole one left. I handed it to Tom, and then eyed the others casually.

'He is hungry too,' I said nonchalantly, and sat down.

They swallowed in ashamed silence, and I said no more until Tom had finished eating, a fairly long and complicated process owing to lack of teeth. The silence was positively oppressive and I had to think of something to end it.

'Whoever gets to the big gates down there first, can choose whatever they like at the sweet stall,' I announced.

The atmosphere snapped. They jumped up and tore down, Tom struggling bravely in the rear. Suddenly I noticed Maria stop and come sedately back.

'I'm sorry abarht the buns,' she said. 'It were 'Arry's ideah. I didn't think you ought ter think it were 'Erb.'

Before I could reply, she turned and fled after the others.

We returned to my room for a picnic tea. Before they left,

I invited them to come to the pantomime at Drury Lane. Then, at last, for the first time, I saw them give way to excitement. It was with difficulty I got them into their homeward train that afternoon.

I looked forward with delighted anticipation to the event. The tickets were there, propped up on the mantelpiece in their envelope. I still had days to wait. In the meantime work claimed all my time. . . .

And then the cable arrived. I was to leave for abroad at once — ‘imperative no delay.’

For the next three days I was entirely submerged. Tickets to buy, trunks to pack, calls to pay, all the fever-pitch paraphernalia that makes unexpected long-distance travelling more devastating than the plague.

It was not until the last morning that my eye fell on the solitary envelope lying on the mantelpiece.

My children and their pantomime! What to do? Where send it? I had never thought of getting their address.

I wrote them a note telling them to use the tickets, and left it with my landlady. . . .

. . . As we steamed up the Channel I stood on deck, watching England fade and merge into the fog. When would I see it again? In a year, or more? What would have become of my three little Cockneys by then? Would they really believe I had to leave suddenly? I could see Tom’s adorable, toothless grin. . . . Why, by that time, new ones will have grown. Yes, of course, he will have a new kind of grin altogether. . . .

I stepped through the saloon door. It slammed behind me.



# IDLINGS IN A ROYAL LIBRARY.

BY DESMOND CHAPMAN-HUSTON.

WE are apt to think that the weekly newspaper articles in which Mr. Ralph Strauss, Mr. L. A. G. Strong, Mr. Humbert Wolfe, Mr. Harold Nicolson and their colleagues outrun all their women competitors in praising undiscovered genius are a phenomenon, regrettable or otherwise, of our own times. Yet this is by no means so. Even the activities of contemporary rival Book Clubs are not original and, as we know from *The Critic*, the puff direct, the puff preliminary, the puff collateral, the puff collusive, the puff oblique, and the puff by implication have long been with us.

Some time ago when turning over United States editions of some English books on the shelves of the Library in the Royal Palace in Madrid I was reminded of the truism that even in modern book publicity there is little that is actually new. In the room in the Royal Palace in which I worked during the autumn of 1930 and spring of 1931 there seemed to be no English books published much later than the first half of the eighteenth century. For the most part they had a dejected, neglected second-hand sort of air as if they were the poor relations of a ducal family of great pretensions but faded hopes. These volumes, one thought, were once fresh and ambitious, seeking for and hopeful of the suffrages of thousands of readers, ambitious of success and perhaps not uncovetous of fame.

When weary of trying to disentangle the exact relationships of the seemingly countless members—nearly all bearing the same Christian names—of the Royal House of Bourbon d'Orleans, Bourbon d'Espagne, Bourbon d'Anjou, Bourbon-Deux-Sicules, Bourbon Parme and Bourbon unadulterated, I liked, in particular, to turn to the advertisement appended to the various volumes of a compilation entitled the *Cabinet of History* conducted by the Rev. Dionysius Lardner, LL.D., F.R.S., L. & E., M.R.I.A., F.R.A.S., F.L.S., F.B.S., Hon.F.C.P.S., etc., etc. The Reverend gentleman appears to have been what the Americans call a 'joiner'! Nevertheless, at least three-quarters of his academic qualifications do not seem to have been such as would carry much weight outside

his home town—wherever that may have been. Somewhat oddly he described himself as being ‘assisted by Eminent Literary Men “who sleep in unknown graves”’!

Volume one of the *Cabinet* dealt with Spain and Portugal, and that in all probability is why I first took it down from its somewhat dusty shelf. It was published in 1832 by Carey and Lea, Chestnut Street, Philadelphia—the firm never defaced their title-page with the inelegant ‘Pa.’ By the way, difficult though it be to avoid, I must not adopt the habit of speaking of this ‘attempt first in our language’ as if it were dead because, as Frederick Lord Dufferin said in his wellnigh perfect introduction to his delightful mother’s volume of *Poems and Verses*, ‘a book once published has put on the robes of immortality.’

The clothes and surroundings of our ancestors are sometimes of more interest than their personalities, and it so happened that I found myself preferring the addenda of the *Cabinet* to its contents. With commendable punctuality and speed the Rev. Dionysius brought out the first two volumes of his great work in 1832 and the last three in 1833, number five, the concluding volume, having a ‘much fuller catalogue.’

At the end of volume two of the *Cabinet* I found a list of works ‘just published by Carey and Lea.’ It led off with the ‘*Private Memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte* from the French of M. Fauvelet de Bourrienne, Private Secretary to the Emperor. Second American Edition, with great additions: complete in one volume.’ Strictly speaking, the announcement left it in doubt as to whether ‘Napoleon Bonaparte’ and ‘the Emperor’ were one and the same person. But no matter. Contemporary readers understood the obscurity well enough. American Republican sentiment, and the English narrow-mindedness epitomised by Hudson Lowe, were alike appeased by calling him plain Napoleon Bonaparte, while spinster subscribers to the circulating libraries were titivated by the reminder that, after all, he was (for a time) an Emperor. An anonymous paragraphist is quoted as praising ‘the literary accomplishments and moral qualifications’ of the author—the ‘moral qualifications,’ apparently, being that he was a traitor, a liar and a scandal-monger! But let us remember what was written (and believed) in England about the Emperor Wilhelm the Second during the European War and, with due humility and shame, avoid the seat of the scornful. *The Times* characteristically announced that ‘no person who is desirous rightly to appreciate the character

of Bonaparte will neglect this work.' One can almost hear the pompous and pontifical scribe hopping gingerly over the danger of a split infinitive. The *Morning Post* asserted that the volume was 'the completest personal recollections of Napoleon that have appeared,' apparently quite oblivious of the fact that they were not Napoleon's recollections at all, but only those of Bourrienne—a fact of which the publishers also seemed in doubt.

The next volume announced has, in truth, a perennial interest. It was the '*Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Behring's Strait* to co-operate with the Polar Expeditions: performed in His Majesty's Ship *Blossom*, under the command of Capt. F. W. Beechey, R.N., in the years 1825, 26, 27, 28. 8vo.' The *Quarterly* describes it as 'the most interesting of the whole series of expeditions to the North Pole,' while *Blackwood's* unequivocally declared that the expedition 'would be for ever memorable,' and the *Literary Gazette* pronounced the narrative as a 'lasting monument to the gallant Captain's own abilities and an honour to his country.' By the way, why is it that the perfectly good word narrative went out of fashion with long titles?

Cheek by jowl with the great works enumerated we have particulars of a volume on the *Progress of Ethical Philosophy* by one Sir James Mackintosh, M.P. (could he have been a Scot?), which in the humble opinion of the critic of the *National Gazette* was the

'best offspring of the pen of an author who in philosophical spirit, knowledge and reflection, richness of moral sentiment, and elegance of style, has altogether no superior—perhaps no equal—among his contemporaries. Some time ago we made copious extracts from this beautiful work. We could not recommend the book too earnestly.'

Knowledge and reflection, richness of moral sentiment, elegance of style, copious extracts. All the literary clichés of the period. Somehow the praise does not ring true. One has the feeling that the writer was paying off some trifling obligation—or was it that he was merely a brother Scot?

The *Lit. Gazette* (elsewhere abbreviated to the *Lit. Gaz.*, has now at least part of its name in full), praising *The Alhambra*, found with apparent astonishment that Washington Irving's work 'had lost nothing of its charm.' A writer in the *New Monthly Magazine* was most certainly not a Scotsman. He described in *The Bravo* by Cooper, the American author of *The Spy*, *Pilot*, *Red Rover*,

etc. in 2 vols. 12mo, 'more mental power, more matter that sets people thinking, more of that quality that is accelerating the onward movement of the world' (what could it have been) 'than in all the Scotch novels that have so deservedly won our admiration.' This was all very well so far as it went, but the *N.Y. Courier and Express* was never going to let down a countryman: for it *The Bravo* was 'full of dramatic interest,' 'hair-breadth escapes'—'animated and bustling scenes in the canals, in the prisons, on the Rialto, in the Adriatic, and in the streets of Venice.'

But we must now leave America and return to England as described in *Salmonia: or Days of Fly Fishing* by Sir H. Davy, which the *Gentleman's Magazine* found 'one of the most delightful labours of leisure ever seen.' Next we have mentioned Sir William Jardine's edition of White's *Selborne* and, for once, the critic did not overshoot the mark when the *Athenæum* declared boldly that it was 'the most fascinating piece of rural writing and sound English philosophy that has ever issued from the press.'

And yet the recently combined *New Statesman and Nation* has dropped the fine old name *Athenæum*. Why?

Mrs. Somerville was announced as being responsible for a volume which discoursed on the *Mechanism of the Heavens*; and astronomy, so to speak, being in the air, *The Family Cabinet Atlas* was also announced; its advent being buttressed by no less than fourteen extracts from divers literary journals occupying a whole page of very small print in the catalogue. Here we have the puff direct of the period at its brightest and best. The *Intelligencer*, typical of all the others, is almost tearful, asserting in a sentence of doubtful grammatical validity that 'It is a crying shame in this age of intellect, if this able and beautiful work be not extensively patronised.'

The 'Elegant Library Editions' of the works—inevitable phrase—of Joanna Baillie, Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, and the Hon. George Canning lead us to *Select Speeches of the Rt. Hon. William Huskisson and of the Rt. Hon. William Wyndham*, with which, perhaps fortunately, we need not unduly concern ourselves.

Dr. Lardner, as the Rev. Dionysius was sometimes described, was evidently a great believer in *Cabinet Cyclopædias* because some twelve or fourteen pages of the catalogue are taken up with matter concerning these compendiums of tactful plagiarisms, amongst the contributors being our Scots friend Sir James Mackintosh, who heads the list—coming even before the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Clogher, who, however, is humbly followed by Sir Walter Scott,

Bart. For once Northern Ireland had no grievance, although Southern Ireland might legitimately be annoyed because Thomas Moore—without any addenda of gentility—although he is given precedence to the Baron Charles Dupen, is made to follow John Frederick William Herschell, Esq., Poet Laureate. S. T. Coleridge, Esq., the last man on the list, being, so to speak, amongst the also rans.

Dr. Lardner himself, most versatile of men, was a regular Admirable Crichton, because amongst his multifarious duties as general editor he finds time (or so he asserts) to be solely responsible for *A Treatise on Hydrostatics and Pneumatics* which the *U.S. Journal* discovered to be written 'with a full knowledge of the subject.' Perhaps. But by whom? Possibly by one of the 'Eminent Literary and Scientific Men' who with such anonymous modesty (while sleeping in unknown graves) aided the indefatigable Doctor.

But now we get into really deep water. *Who* was Sir James Mackintosh? We have him announced as the author of a *Biography of British Statesmen* containing the 'Lives of Sir Thomas More.' Was the Saint—as he now is—catlike in having more than one? Then follows Sir James's *History of England* in 8 vols.; taking precedence of the *History of Scotland* by Sir Walter Scott in 2 vols.; and lastly, we arrive at the *History of France* in 3 vols. by T. B. Macaulay, Esq., M.P., which the *Monthly Magazine* found 'worthy to figure with the works of his associates, the best of their day, Scott and Mackintosh'! Was Macaulay really pleased at being bracketed with Sir James? Possibly not; but then in all generations authors are an ungrateful lot.

It would appear that even in those days great noblemen could venture with credit into print, and, if they so desired, be indiscreet there. *The Marquess of Londonderry's narrative of the Late War in Germany and France*, according to the reviewer in the *Globe*, introduced its readers 'into the cabinets and presence of the allied monarchs.' It showed 'the course pursued by the wily Bernadotte, the temporising Metternich and the ambitious Alexander.' The *American Traveller* asserted that the author had 'singular facilities.' No doubt he had. How we envy him those 'singular facilities' and wonder—without having the energy to find out—just what literary use the most noble Marquess made of them. The *Nashville Banner*—delicious title (almost as good as *The Skibereen Eagle*)—asserted without qualification that Lord Londonderry's was 'the

only authentic account of the memorable events' to which it referred.

Next we come to a certain Mr. A. Bolmar who must have been little less than a godsend in days when conversation was still an art, if a decaying one. This admirable gentleman was responsible for *A Collection of Colloquial Phrases* 'on every topic necessary to maintain conversation.' The word maintain is perhaps a little too strenuous for such an airy business. But Mr. Bolmar seemed to be assured that his method was unfailing. His volume was 'arranged under different heads, with numerous remarks on the peculiar pronunciation and use of various words.' One can imagine the social climber of those days—faint yet pursuing—making this a bedside book. Mrs. Malaprop, clearly, did not possess this treasure. How one would like to have seen Lady Sneerwell present her with an inscribed copy.

The *Medical Chirurgical Review* had, apparently, ambitions not unlike those of a popular contemporary daily. It examined at great length a work by John Abercrombie, M.D., published under a descriptive title that surely must in those days have seemed a little indiscreet? It was *Pathological and Practical Researches on Diseases of the Stomach, the Intestinal Canal, the Liver, and other Viscera of the Abdomen*. This, the first of some forty works on medical subjects, would seem to prove that our ancestors, English and American, were as much concerned about health as we are, and had ample stores of information at their disposal; moreover, no less than three volumes out of the forty dealt with the teeth; indeed, the volume entitled *American Dentistry* was in its ninth edition.

About that time a German nobleman, Prince Pückler-Muskau, obligingly made a tour through the southern and western parts of England. The Prince had a 'mind richly imbued with literature,' a 'fine taste for the arts,' his manner was 'absolutely fascinating.' His opinions, 'always valuable,' were calculated to 'teach us to see ourselves, not with our own eyes, but with the eyes of others.' Alas! in spite of his 'absolutely fascinating manner' the lessons taught us by the Prince have been, one fears, but imperfectly learned; but this is in no way the fault of his *La Belle Assemblée*, in which, over a century ago, he somewhat tearfully pointed out our greatest national shortcomings.

There is another volume published that year which, surely, must have had an immense success. Its priceless title, the last

word in elevated gentility, suggests depths of rapturous elegance almost too fragile and exquisite to be expressed in mere words. It is *Legends of the Library at Lilies* by the Lord and Lady There. In 2 vols. 12mo. The *Library Gazette* found these 'two delightful volumes with the pathos exquisitely relieved by gaiety; and the romantic legend well contrasted by the lively sketch from actual existence.' The *Library Gazette* would.

Another item from the catalogue announcements of that autumn was entitled *The Summer Fête. A Poem, with Songs*. By Thomas Moore, Esq., Author of *Irish Melodies*, etc. When is a poem not a song and a song not a poem? Being no authority on such high matters we can only abandon (with a genteel sigh) this exquisitely elegant speculation. To pursue it further would unduly enlarge the ambit of our ruminations.

Even so we must spare a paragraph for *The Wondrous Tale of Alroy: The Rise of Iskander*. By D'Israeli. Apparently, anticipating his peerage, he already disdained Christian names—if one of his race can be said to have such a thing! The *Athenæum* found 'Genius stamped on every page' of *Alroy*; but that famous journal was always very Conservative and by then 'D'Israeli' was a Tory hope, and doubtless already a 'shining' one because, as we know, in all he did D'Israeli insisted on glitter, and political glitter seems often to have the effect of enabling reviewers to perceive genius. The *Athenæum* writer ecstatically continues:

'Feelings such as the muse delights in abound, nay, overflow with a truly heroic loftiness of soul, such as influenced devout men of old when they warred for their country, glows and flashes through the whole narrative.'

Well, tastes differ, thank goodness. D'Israeli seems to have had an intoxicating effect on all reviewers. One expected some reserve in the pages of the *Athenæum*, but is nowise surprised when the *Monthly Magazine* becomes almost frantic with emotion. The author had 'visited the vast plains and the mighty rivers, the burning deserts, and the mystic rivers he describes.' A good touch, that. Later on the reviewer is on firmer ground than the bed of a 'mystic river' when he finds the book 'too acheingly brilliant. Every page loaded with poetical adornment.' Yet this was not all. Our old friend *Ibid.*, who, even then, must surely have been a little blasé, found 'sparkle on every page.'

In an article in a magazine published by the House of Murray

it will not be inappropriate to mention Byron. James Kennedy, M.D., of H.M. Medical Staff, in 8 vols. 12mo., told of *Conversations on Religion* with Lord Byron and others, held in Cephalonia, a short time previous to his Lordship's death. The *U.S. Gazette* in a review said : ' It is remarked by the author, that there was nothing in the manner of Lord Byron towards him during the conversations approaching levity, or anything that indicated a wish to mock at religion.' The author also recorded ' much conversation not concerned with religious lectures,' and used occasions to ' represent Lord Byron in a favourable light.'

Like the rest of us poor Byron was somewhat in need of being represented in a favourable light. It is a legitimate—though nowadays outmoded—attitude for a Memoir writer to adopt to his subject. Nor are any of us ungrateful to a reviewer who condescends to throw a favourable light on our literary efforts, however fitful, or even distorting, that light may prove to be.

In volume four the Carey and Lea of volumes one to three had become Carey, Lea and Blanchard, and they announced as on sale *Mansfield Park*, *Persuasion*, *Elizabeth Bennet*, or *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Northanger Abbey* and *Emma*—all in 2 vols. Beneath this appears what might be called the puff fraternal : ' One of the first Female Novelists '—Sir Walter Scott. How our dear Jane would be jostled in the Sunday newspapers were she to make her appearance nowadays ! Far be it from me to question Sir Walter's syntax—but can one be one of the first ? The question reminds me of a story of my dear old friend the late Percy Armytage. Known to his intimates as ' P. A. ' he was a devoted servant of the Royal family from the days when, as a personal friend, he helped the Duchess of Teck to arrange the wedding presents of her only daughter Princess May, until the day of his death ; he published a few years ago that most delightful volume of reminiscences *By the Clock of St. James's*. I was staying with him about the time the famous volume (his one ewe lamb) appeared, when one night after dinner he announced :

' Of course the King must have the *first* copy.'

' Yes, P. A. ; but what about the Queen ? After all you served her Mother, and Her Majesty has been a kind friend to you since her girlhood.'

' Ah, that's a poser. I must sleep on it.'

Next morning P. A. came down to breakfast full of triumph. The man who introduced round tables at St. James's Palace as a



means of settling awkward questions of precedence during international conferences was not to be easily beaten. The perfect courtier, he had found his solution.

‘I have it, my friend; the King shall have the *first* copy, and the Queen *one* of the first copies.’

And so it was.

But to return to the *Cabinet of History*. The increased space occupied by the ‘much fuller catalogue’ enables the panegyrist to unburden himself after the manner of one of our contemporary publishers aching to pass on to a waiting world the great literary light they have miraculously just discovered in the gloom of their own dingy office. ‘Miss Austen’s Novels, Complete’ are announced—and then the big guns are trained. I will no more vouch for the grammar of the announcement than I would for my own:

‘Her merit considered, her perfection in one style, Miss Austen is the most appreciated Novelist of her time. The *Quarterly Review* (to its honour be it remembered) was the first critical authority which did justice to her merits, and that after the grave had closed over her unenvious and modest genius.’

However gratifying to her English publishers and to Messrs. Carey, Lea and Blanchard, the ‘appreciation’ from this august authority appears to have been a little too belated to do much to warm the heart of ‘unenvious and modest’ Jane. But that, alas! is common form with ‘appreciation’ whether personal, professional or public. One thinks of Florence Nightingale being ceremoniously handed the Order of Merit when she had both feet and half her head in the grave. (And here let me venture to suggest to certain eminent living writers, long since entitled to that Honour, that they need never abandon hope. When official recognition has been showered on all the second-raters a dribble or two may reach even them.)

Taking down volume three of the *Cabinet Cyclopædia* we find the publishers, in truly modern fashion, quoting one author in praise of the work of another. In the advertisements attached to *Our Village*, we are told that Miss Mitford describes Miss Austen as ‘the most correct of female writers’—which is not the adjective we ourselves would have chosen. However, Miss Mitford, as a fellow authoress, must have known the right word with which to stimulate sales, and doubtless ‘correct’ was as effective then as ‘suggestive’ (in the bad sense) would be now. The *Quarterly*,

never far wrong, found Miss Austen's 'fables, in their own way, nearly faultless.' *Persuasion* was described by a critic in the same distinguished Review as 'one of the most elegant fictions of common life he ever remembers to have met with.' However, it is when writing of *Elizabeth Bennet, or Pride and Prejudice* that our *Quarterly Reviewer* really lets himself go. He declared—one can hardly believe that it was before the days of Miss Rebecca West and Miss Edith Shackleton—that the authoress:

'conducts her conversations with a regard to character hardly exceeded by Shakespeare himself. Like him, she shows as admirable a discrimination in the character of fools, as of people of sense: a merit far from common . . . Those who delight in the study of human nature, may improve in knowledge of it, and in the profitable application of that knowledge, by the perusal of such fictions.'

Nowadays, if a critic wants to send readers to a book he (or she) declares how wicked and demoralising it is and, forthwith, its sales soar upward, ever upward. Not so our ancestors—and, emphatically not, in the *Quarterly*.

But one last glance at our *Cabinet Cyclopædia*. The advertisement quoted in praise of Jane is antithetical in the most modern fashion. Having begun by quoting Scott's praise of her, it concludes: 'It is remarkable that Scott, who noticed with praise many inferior authors, never mentioned Miss Austen. *Examiner*.' That, if true, would hardly be less remarkable than the young Walter's failure to applaud Burns.

Praise of authors has become such common form in our literary journals and newspapers that persons of sobriety of mind and judgment are apt to be so disgusted with it that it sometimes has the undesigned effect of putting them off reading the belauded volume. We are apt to think this clamorous overstatement a characteristic of our own times, but, as has already been suggested, praise was bespattered quite as noisily and indiscriminately a hundred years ago.

*THE BUR.*

It was months later, back in town  
 That I found it clinging to my gown—  
 A small dried bur, yet potent, filled  
 With power to hold the street sounds stilled  
 And sweep me back to that autumn day  
 When we took a new and untried way.  
 How firm was the ground beneath our tread!  
 How blue were the blue skies overhead!  
 Do you remember the crows in flight?  
 How we laughed to hearken their harsh delight  
 As they settled again on the shocks of corn—  
 Debonair robbers as ever were born!  
 The ruddy apples along the way,  
 The briers that caught us and bade us stay,  
 The coral rose-hips, the sassafras,  
 The fragile ghosts in the waving grass—  
 Dim wraiths of flowers from summer's prime—  
 Brittle and grey with the early rime.  
 We passed them all, and at last we came  
 Into the woodland . . .

Flame on flame  
 The glory mounted! From every tree  
 Crimson and amber in ecstasy  
 Mingled their notes till we seemed to hear  
 The impassioned voice of the dying year  
 In a last great choral—defying death  
 With lips that shrank from his frosty breath!  
 Dizzy with colour and drunk with wine  
 Of the crystal air—O friend of mine,  
 In that golden hour of simple joy  
 I was just a girl, you were just a boy.  
 We were youth eternal! How far away  
 The cares and conflicts of yesterday!  
 To-morrow? To-morrow was but a dream . . .  
 Weary at last, by the little stream,

Still as the shadows mirrored there  
 We sat in silence. Ah, who could bear  
 To shatter that quiet into speech,  
 To talk of duty, admonish, preach?  
 I could not! The words that I meant to say  
 Died on my lips . . .

But oh, that day  
 Had I spoken, persuaded, tried to fire  
 The dormant spirit with high desire,  
 Perchance some word of them all had clung  
 Like this small grey bur, till it pricked and stung.  
 And I should not be breaking my heart to-day  
 O my comrade, for words that I did *not* say!

JOSEPHINE JOHNSON.

*Virginia, U.S.A.*

#### WINTER CONSOLATION.

COME, let your hearts to thoughts be clinging  
 Of dappled things and bright,  
 Small humming-birds, and leafy singing,  
 And wild geese poised for flight;  
 A crooked tree in autumn, flinging  
 Gold gauntlets to the world,  
 And days when birds no more are singing,  
 But snows are winter-swirled.  
 What though the aged year is failing,  
 A glory yet is hers,  
 Clear winter skies, and bright clouds sailing  
 Like sculptured mariners.  
 What though the gorse no more is screening  
 The headlands by the sea,  
 There is a new yet ancient meaning  
 About the naked tree.  
 What though the cornfields that were leaning  
 To catch the song of the lark  
 Are garnered sheaves, there's starry gleanings  
 By fires, in winter's dark.

HERBERT BLUEN.

MADAME DE MALITOURN'S COLD.

BY F. L. LUCAS.

‘But, Madame?’

‘Well, Perrette?’

‘Madame said, the other day—when Madame de Villette was here—that the Princesse de Conti had trained her little dog to bite Monsieur le Prince——’

For a moment, propped on her pillows, Madame de Malitourn frowned into vacancy over the top of her book. ‘You have no business to overhear things I say, Perrette. I never met such a little hurluberlu.’ Then suddenly she half smiled; with two white teeth indenting her lower lip in suppressed amusement. ‘Well?’

Perrette smiled also, framed there in the tall bedroom-window with her right hand grasping her left wrist, between eagerness and embarrassment. Shy but sly, with her light-brown hair and hazel eyes and roguishly pointed nose, she suggested a little fox, paw in air, reconnoitring a hen-roost. ‘But please, Madame, was it *really* true?’

‘What, when *I* said it! Doubt *my* word!’

‘Madame is making fun of me.’

‘Well, not quite true, Perrette. But true enough. Much too true.’

Madame de Malitourn’s face darkened suddenly and her mouth set, with a little cynical bracket curling round each corner. She lifted her book again, as if to read; adding, in tones of slightly studied coldness, ‘What the Princess actually said to me was—if you *must* know—“I think I shall have to train Pouf to bite the Prince; only his taste is so frightful that I am afraid it would upset poor Pouf as badly as it upsets me.” But I expect she was joking.’

‘Joking!’ said Perrette with a mournful moue. She turned to gaze out of the window at the dun February afternoon. There was a silence. Only the raindrops dripped stolidly in the avenue, making and breaking again their brief bubbles in the puddles under the disconsolate elms. Occasionally the fire spluttered, like

a dog sneezing at cold water, as a stray drop descended the gaping blackness of the old chimney. Perrette sniffed. With the dry noise of a dead leaf rustling, a page of Madame de Malitourn's book turned over. But from under the canopy of her four-poster she had thrown a quick glance at her maid: 'Anything wrong, Perrette? Or is it just having caught my cold?'

'Wrong? No. . . . Ah, Madame will forgive me for asking. I know I am green—green as grass. I have never seen Paris, and I am terribly, terribly ignorant. But—is it *always* wrong for . . . the right people, for people of quality, to love their wives?'

With a shrug of amused despair Madame de Malitourn dropped her book on the mountain of counterpane made by her knees. 'My poor Perrette, the maggots you do get into your little head! "Love their wives!" Why not? Nothing against it. Why, there's Monsieur de Maurepas has never been a day away from his—for nearly half a century it must be, by now.'

'But Madame said . . .'

'Oh yes, people laugh at them—"How ridiculous!" Foxes without tails think nothing so ridiculous as foxes with.' 'Yes,' she went on, half to herself, 'it's odd that people can be so faithful to other people's wives, who couldn't to save their lives be faithful to their own.' Her voice rang hard with a sudden resonance, like a frosty road.

'But I don't understand. Monsieur le Curé says I shall go to Hell if . . . because it's a mortal sin. And yet Madame de Villette goes to Mass; and Confession. And they say *she* . . .'

'Never mind what they say about Madame de Villette.'

'But what is she thinking *inside*? What does her Confessor say to her? I don't understand. It oughtn't to be different, for the rich and for the poor. It doesn't seem right. It's not the poor that go to Hell, in the Bible.'

There was something attractively honest, though not beautiful, in Perrette's husky, eager voice. Madame de Malitourn looked at her more curiously; amused, surprised, not meaning to be supercilious, but a little as if suddenly confronted with a calculating horse. 'Go to Hell, Perrette? Who knows? But it's perishing cold in here meanwhile. Put on some wood, will you? You're thinking of Dives and Lazarus?' Her tone grew mocking. 'But I dare say Dives wasn't of really good family, anyway—just one of those rascally financiers.'

Perrette left gazing out at the acid green of February fields and

with pink fingers began laying on the fire—slowly, as if she half-pitied them—three or four split billets from the elm blown down last November at the gate beside her father's lodge. The scars and wrinkles on their bark seemed to her familiar as the lines of some well-known face of her childhood; here and there a twig showed the tiny buds that had already begun to form in vain for another spring. Her look clouded.

‘Madame does not believe in Hell?’

‘Goodness, child, I never said that.’

‘Ah, but we poor simple people are not so simple as Madame thinks.’ Her country pink deepened with a flush of resentment as she stooped above the fire-dogs and swept the hearth with curt strokes, that whisked the ashes under the grate as if Perrette were tidying up the Universe. ‘The gentry go to Mass just for the sake of the servants and the poor; but the poor know.’

For a moment Madame de Malitourn instinctively stiffened. In an Age of Enlightenment . . . It was pleasant to unbend . . . But if the lower classes began to assume . . . Suzanne, her Parisian maid who had left in dudgeon after a week buried here in the country, had been saucy enough to her equals, but always slyly demure to her. Whereas this little hoyden, budding into a rural *philosophe* . . . And yet why not? It was not unamusing. And, after all, in ‘an Age of Enlightenment’ . . .

‘*Enfant terrible!*’ she laughed. ‘Quite true, you’re not so simple as you seem. Like life, Perrette. Like all of us. You find people like Madame de Villette hard to understand? Do you know why? Because like all of us she is several people.’

‘Several people?’

‘Yes, there’s a Perrette that thinks the rich should have their money taken away.’ Perrette, standing in front of the fire, coloured and instinctively thrust her arms behind her back, like a child caught red-handed. ‘And a different Perrette that loves hearing all that the rich do. There’s a Perrette that thinks she might be very happy married to young Pierre Huchon.’ The girl’s colour deepened. ‘And another Perrette that considers how often the poor stop loving, like the rich, once they’re married; and says “I’d rather be free.” Eh? Two minds about it, like the two figures in a weather-house. And you never know which of them will be outside to-morrow. And both are you.’

Perrette slowly smiled and looked sideways down at the flames now beginning to lick, like treacherous dogs, at the wood she had

put on. It was hard to say how much of the rose on her features came from the firelight. She had lost her jauntiness. She was awed by such penetration.

'And which Perrette is outside at the moment? The marrying one?'

The answer was a smiling whisper, while Perrette pivoted on her toes, turning half to the right, then half to the left again. 'No, Madame.'

'Ah, I thought not. So that is why you don't want to go to the fair to-morrow? Pretty weather for that! But what has poor Pierre done?'

'Nothing.'

'What, then?'

'The "weather" has just changed, I suppose.'

'Changed? Why?'

Perrette was silent.

'No notion? Just caught a chill in the heart, as well as in the head?' Hortense de Malitourn could be very engaging, when she relaxed her manner of tired great lady and smiled with amused sympathy. Here, felt Perrette, was someone who really understood what one meant; better, perhaps, than oneself.

'Madame might be angry.'

'Why should I?'

'But sometimes when I——'

'When you are *enfant terrible*? Why, yes, Perrette, you have a fondness for the naked truth that can be perfectly—— But I like it really. Especially after Paris. Just as once, after coming home from Versailles, I sat for a solid hour watching my cat wash her kittens—here was something real, at last. Yes, you're a kitten too, Perrette. And what's wrong with your poor mouse, now you've caught him?'

For a moment Perrette pensively bit the tip of one pink finger; then, taking her courage in both hands—'Because Madame has only been married a few years. And Madame is not happy—oh, I *know*. And to-day Monsieur is coming home—and Madame is not any gayer. And they say that Monsieur . . .' Perrette reined in her tongue with a jerk.

'Well, Perrette, what *do* they say?'

Perrette was mute and red, twisting her fingers in her apron.

'That Monsieur de Malitourn amuses himself elsewhere?'

Perrette nodded, apprehensively.



'And that I also amuse myself?'

Perrette, really frightened, gnawed the back of her hand.

'And that I do too?'

'Yes, Madame.'

'Don't look so terrified. Why shouldn't they?' Madame de Malitourn gave a little laugh of bitter satisfaction; the satisfaction of biting on an aching tooth. 'Though it's quite untrue. "Amuse oneself!"—oh, the boredom of it! The stupid boredom of it! One burns one's house down to warm one's fingers, one dull evening. Very "amusing," no doubt—to watch. And plenty of ashes to repent in afterwards.' Then, pulling herself together—'But what's all that to you, Perrette? You're young. But not too young—what's this nonsense about not marrying him? Isn't he good enough?'

Perrette shook her head, with a sudden seriousness that made her look years older: 'No, too good. I don't want it to be me that makes him unhappy—if *that's* what marriage means.' Then, with a return of impishness, she smiled—'And then I've been thinking it might be amusing, all the same—to "amuse oneself." And I hoped—when Madame is better and goes back to Paris . . . Oh, Madame, won't you take me? I should so love to see Paris, and whether it's all that they say.'

'All that they say, little simpleton? Paris is all that—and worse! Full of dead men laughing—hearts hard as bone—heads empty as skulls. And once you've drunk the water of the Seine, Perrette, you become like a beast that's tasted blood. You can't be happy there: but you can't be happy anywhere else. Oh, the good little bourgeois of Paris, *they* doubtless live snug as rats in a cheese; but I'm not thinking of *them*.'

'You see,' she went on with a smile, her ennui momentarily diverted by those wide-open hazel eyes, 'a Seine is a net, Perrette. And the foolish fishes, they come crowding in, all agape; but they don't get out again.'

'And Madame?'

'Oh, *this* foolish fish jumped over the net. It's in no hurry to be caught again for the moment; and yet . . . But you're broiling the fish alive with all that wood you've put on. Open the window. It's suffocating.'

'But the damp air? After Madame's fever?'

'Pooh, I am warm enough.' And Madame de Malitourn sighed, as if too bored to mind what happened. The raw February air

began to stream in from the fading dusk outside, where the white mists came floating up from the canal to blanket the elms for the night. Opposite rose the wooded hill of Garancières, clawed by long wispy fingers of vapour as if it had been some remote mountain-side in the Jura. All was silence but for the monotonous weeping of the branches, the chirp and gurgle of the gutters on the roof.

'Poor weather for hermits,' yawned Madame de Malitourn, glancing listlessly up from her book.

'But spring is coming, Madame. The aconite is out in the avenue.'

'Aconite? Ah, *mon Dieu*, the new year may well begin with poison! All that tedious round of flowers to be gone through again; round and round like a stage-army.' Madame de Malitourn grew silent; clearly she could not be reading—it had grown too dark; infected with the same depression, Perrette lent her elbows on the sill, and her chin on her hands, and gazed into the twilight emptiness. Suddenly she cried: 'I can see the lamps of a carriage. It must be Monsieur.' For a minute there was no answer; then—'Shut the window, Perrette; I feel cool enough now. And light the candles by my bed. And come and tidy my hair. And bring me the deeper rouge. Quick!'

When all was done, Madame de Malitourn shifted the bed-curtains a little forward, so that her face was in shadow. 'More candles; on the mantelpiece.'

'On the mantelpiece, Madame?'

'Do as you're told, Perrette. Illumination in his honour. After three whole years apart, what an occasion to celebrate! Monsieur de Malitourn is not going to find me brooding here like an owl in a ruin. And I like to see people's faces.'

'It is Madame's face that is worth seeing.'

'Pooh, keep your flatteries till you get to Paris. Give me my glass again. And a new ribbon for my nightcap. And now open the door and let's listen.'

From the hall below came the sound of a voice giving orders; a slightly tired, disillusioned, yet sensitive voice. There were steps on the stairs—in the corridor—framed in the doorway stood Monsieur de Malitourn.

Madame's head was quietly bent above her book. After a moment he strode forward into the room, clearing his throat. Slowly she lifted her grey eyes and clear-cut face to that slightly stiff figure before her; and found it little changed. Still the same

contrasts—the same impeccable clothes, that yet showed snuff on cuff and waistcoat, the same pockets bulging with cherished objects ; the same sharp features and steady eyes, whose oft-noted resemblance to the great Frederic was belied by a touch of self-indulgence about the mouth ; the same vaguely dreamy look that seemed so out of keeping with those firm, restless, practical hands. Coldly he bowed, hat under arm ; watched by a frightened yet fascinated Perrette.

‘You can go, Perrette.’ Reluctantly she went.

In colourless, but not ungentle tones, with eyes that watched not his wife but the closing door, he said : ‘I heard, Hortense, of your—illness. I thought I had better come.’ He walked past the foot of the bed to stand with his back to the fire, laying his hat on a table beside it. ‘So you have got rid of the little red-lacquered Chinese table ?’ His tone was vexed and hurt ; but he checked himself. ‘But never mind now, never mind.’ She remembered how he had carried it in here and given it her (it was one of his cherished possessions) during the first days of their marriage. Indeed, she had remembered too well ; it had saddened her. Hence its banishment to the attic, when she came home, ten days ago.

He took snuff, to occupy his fingers. Through her curtains she scrutinized him with defiant amusement ; it was like being in a box at the theatre, watching a figure on the stage. She was not going to prompt him. She had not asked him to come ; she resented this intrusion. Those who have once agreed to live and let live, have even less excuse than ordinary couples for anything as low and ridiculous as jealousy or espionage. And yet that was not like him. And yet what else . . . ?

He seemed to read her thoughts. ‘As I say,’ he went on, ‘I heard you were ill—and alone here. So I thought I had better come. I need not stay.’

‘That was very charming of you, Étienne.’

‘Charming ! Are you laughing at me ?’ He flushed angrily, shifting on his heels and looking away into the other corners of the room. Its slim fluted pilasters, its white panels, its heavy red curtains, its chairs with their graceful air of antelopes ready at any moment to gallop away—all these old friends of his childhood, far older in his memory than this alien presence that was their mistress now—seemed to look back at him with faces no less heart-breakingly estranged.

'Laughing at you! Of course not—why should I?' (How difficult he always was!) 'But how did you hear I was ill?'

'Oh, I heard,' he said curtly. 'The whole story.'

'Story! You seem to take my affairs very seriously, all of a sudden.' There was a return of antagonism in her laugh. 'If I had thought you would take it so to heart, I would have written and told you—even though there has been about as much correspondence between us, of late years, as between Mecca and the Holy Father.'

He shrugged his shoulders testily, walked across to the window, and stared out into the dusk. He knew each tree in that avenue; but they too seemed to-night to know him no more.

Suddenly he exploded. 'Why, what has become of the sundial? What fool has moved it? It was a rarity—a genuine Gothic piece. I found it myself in an old garden in Chartres.'

The voice from the bed was imperturbable, like an adult calming a fretful child. 'Ah, you antiquarians! It is just round the corner. *I* moved it last week. The trees had grown so that the poor thing could hardly get a glimpse of the sun. It had quite stopped marking time. Not that *I* want objects to mark time, or remind me of it. There are only too many, as it is, to do that. But *you* are a perfect Ancient of Days. Such a jealous God about your cherished possessions!—and yet so given to long absences, in which you forget all about the poor things.'

He was silent, weighing her words for double meanings.

'When I began to feel ill in Paris,' she went on, 'I had a sudden impulse to come back here. It is so quiet. And knowing you were away in Paris, so that I should not be disturbing your privacy . . .'  
(Her voice was growing involuntarily bitterer, with this rigmarole of explanations that sounded too like lame excuses.) 'And not expecting to stay here long . . .'

'Long enough to set the whole village talking,' he said ill-humouredly, with his back to her. 'But now that I have come, there may be less of that.' He turned round. 'Forgive me—I have not yet asked how you are.'

'Oh, the doctor says I can get up to-morrow.'

'To-morrow! It is all over then?'

'I certainly trust so.'

'So quickly!'

'Oh, I wasn't very bad. Slight fever—nothing to worry about. The thing just took its normal course.'

‘But what have you done about it?’ His tone grew colder and colder.

She laughed. ‘Really, Monsieur, you are becoming very medical and inquisitive. Doctor as well as antiquarian! But I suppose an interest in the dead may lead to an interest in killing.’ He was not amused: she began to be a little puzzled by his solemnity. ‘Do about it? Just went to bed and took the ordinary precautions. You make too much of such trifles, *mon ami*.’

‘And now . . . ? I suppose you have passed it on to someone else?’

‘Really! As if I could help it! Why, yes, actually I’ve given it to poor Perrette—Nicole’s girl, from the lodge—she was here when you came—my Paris maid wouldn’t stay. But she’s nearly rid of it now, thank Heaven!’

‘I doubt if Heaven takes much hand in such matters. And who is she going to give it to, I wonder?’

‘Goodness, how should I know? Why this extraordinary concern all at once . . . I suppose it will just go the round of the household, like a bad sou. If you are not careful, Monsieur, I shall give it to you.’

‘You seem excessively light-hearted about it, Madame.’

‘Light-hearted? Do I? You sound sorry. Did you hope to find me deep in dumps and vapours? I was not *feeling* very light-hearted, I must say: but I am delighted I seem so. I never had much use for moping.’

‘I mean light-hearted about others. A less amiable quality.’

‘Really, Monsieur, I begin to think that one or other of us is growing *light-headed*. And I doubt if it is for you, precisely, at this moment to talk about being “amiable”! All this commotion about a perfectly trivial domestic upset!—such as can happen in any household any day! And here you are with an air as tragic as an undertaker! Could I help it?’

‘I should have thought it not beyond the bounds of possibility.’ He strode over to the fire again and stood warming his hands with his back to her.

‘Upon my soul, Monsieur, I cannot conceive how. I should be ravished to hear. Do you expect me to live alone in a hollow tree like a Gothic hermit? Or in a cell with a loaf and jug of water lowered through a trap-door, as if I were at the bottom of the Bastille? Perhaps you are actually thinking of having my life arranged like that, by *lettre de cachet*? You seem marvellously

considerate of everyone but me. One would think I was a leper, or had the plague. I wonder you dare venture into my pestiferous apartment !'

The levity in her tone hurt him—for her sake as well as for his own. He turned back from the fire to scan her face, with a mixture of regret and perplexity in his deep-set eyes that irritated her. She picked up her book again, as if it had been a gage of defiance. 'Once for all, Monsieur, I do not know why you should arrive here looking like Orestes halloo'd by the Furies. But I am not interested in this sort of mystery. I was touched at first by your coming to see me ; I felt ill and lonely. But if you have turned Jansenist, I must beg you to unload your unseasonable enthusiasm elsewhere. I am not on my death-bed ; if I were, I should not want spiritual consolation ; and if I did, I should not ask for yours. But even if I am not very ill, I am not very well. I have no desire to be preached into another fever. Among your mummies and scarabs in Paris, there must be some princess dead five thousand years who would make you a more patient audience.'

Monsieur de Malitourn picked up his hat. 'Madame, I propose to relieve you as quickly as possible of my burdensome presence. I never came to preach at you—I know that is not for me to do. But you will please, in return, to have done with these cynical evasions. I did not come from Paris to spy on you ; nor to reproach you—I have no right. I simply came to shield your reputation. That apparently was needless anxiety and wasted pains.' (The puzzled frown furrowed itself deeper and deeper in Madame de Malitourn's white forehead.) 'But in common humanity I must ask more precisely what has become of the child. Human beings are not kittens.'

'The child ! *What* child ! What infamy . . . ?—you fool, Étienne, what scandal-mongering old mischief-maker has been—— ? I have had a *chill*, my good sir ! Not a child ! Ah, *mon Dieu* !' And Madame de Malitourn, still weak, sank back in her pillows and laughed hysterically till the tears ran down her face ; hardly keeping the presence of mind to wipe hastily away the rouge with which they were making havoc. Perrette, listening not very effectively outside the door, but hearing this hysteria at least only too clearly, grew agonised with uncertainty whether to rush in to the rescue, or away for help ; and in her dilemma remained rooted where she stood.

For a moment Monsieur de Malitourn stiffened indignantly :

then something girlishly natural and genuine in the ring of her laughter began to convince him, more completely than an hour's explanation could have done. With a sudden sense of the grotesqueness of his position he returned to the window. A three-quarter moon, looking, with its unequal cheeks, like a face swollen with toothache, and swathed in a whitish nightcap of cloud, stared lugubriously down at him and the glimmering puddles in the drive. Even nature seemed *narquois* to-night. There was silence now in the room behind him. 'Well, Monsieur,' said an ironic voice from the bed-curtains, 'you have turned your back on the enemy: do you surrender?—or withdraw?' There was a note of challenge in the last word. Monsieur de Malitourn turned with a smile and walked back to the bedside. 'I surrender, Madame.'

'To my discretion?'

'Yes: to all you have of it.'

'You doubt it! But seriously, Étienne, you believe me?'

'I believe your face and your voice, Hortense.'

'In spite of my "cynical evasions"?'

He smiled. 'I have thrown myself, I said, on your mercy, Madame.'

'Then tell me at once where you got hold of this cock-and-bull story.'

'It is the common talk of the Rue Saint-Honoré. You should have heard the sudden silence in each *salon* as I entered.'

'*Quelle canaille!* Common talk! *Common* enough! Ah, *mon Dieu*, the "right people" are so much, much vulgarer than the real people.'

'But when you suddenly choose to bury yourself in the depths of the country in the depth of February. Twenty leagues from Paris! And "for your health"—after consulting a doctor—so renowned a doctor as the great Tronchin himself, so that *everybody* hears . . .'

'He said I needed quiet and air—"too much Paris"—my chest was weak.'

'But at this time of year! What sort of illness do you suppose it generally is that so urgently needs country air at Candlemas? Too like Madame d'Épinay's sudden trip to Geneva. Can you wonder the fine world made its own diagnosis?'

'I am not fine enough for their subtleties.'

'Why, even your brother's wife, when I met her last week and asked after you, as usual—'

She glanced at him ; he was looking into the distance. ' Yes ? ' ' She said she heard you had gone home to Fontenay, " for your health." Did she know what was wrong ? " No." But her look said—" Of course we all know, you poor man. So do you ; or you have more than the proverbial innocence of husbands." Never have I seen anyone more discreetly indiscreet.'

' And you believed these cats, these carrion-crows ! Do you think if I had that sort of secret to hide, I should come to *your* house to hide it ? What have I ever done that——'

' I should not have believed their gossip by itself.'

' What else, then ? '

' Sophie.'

Madame de Malitourn's pale face flushed. ' Ah, trust an actress to know ! Plots and intrigues being in her professional line of business. But no, I am being vulgarly jealous. So Sophie had news from these haunts of her childish innocence ! From whom, pray ? '

' From her brother, the *curé*, of course.'

' He still writes to her !—a *fille de l'opéra* ! '

' Oh, even *curés* are human. If she died to-morrow, he would deny her Christian burial ; but he may yet save her soul. She's still his sister in this world ; however different their destinations in the next.'

' Not as different perhaps as he supposes ! And he said ? '

' Oh, amongst other things, that a hideous scandal was disturbing the peace of his poor parish—and how troubled he was for your salvation——'

' Let him mind his own.'

' —the more so that, though you had the reputation of being passably infidel, and seldom went to Mass, and read heathen poets, like Tibullus, when you did, you had always been good to him.'

' He remembered ! '

' And that made it the harder for me to disbelieve him. He was not just being malicious.'

' Does he know Sophie is under your protection ? '

' No. And that too made it harder to disbelieve—he was writing without any set design ; except, no doubt, to warn her against the wages of sin in general.'

' With which same object, I suppose, she then showed it to you ! '

' You are unjust. In her place would *you* have kept it dark ? She was always jealous of you.'



'Of me! How comical!'

'And when we heard the other day that you had left Monsieur de Saint-Amand, she had a bad fit of it. You see——'

'What you heard was untrue.'

He started slightly. 'You mean he is still with you?'

'No. But it was Monsieur de Saint-Amand who left *me*.'

Her voice shook a little; then went on with unnatural smoothness. 'Monsieur de Saint-Amand is a polite and delicate character; as becomes a poet and a soldier. Having confessed he had grown tired of me—"after all, a too constant butterfly would weary the sweetness of any rose"—he told the world *I* had grown tired of *him*. And for proof shut himself up for three days—writing an elegy, no doubt. And so everybody went about saying: "Poor Saint-Amand—quite inconsolable, I hear." So you see. Give me my fan. And when did Sophie have this divine revelation?'

'Last night. You had arrived here, I gathered, a week ago; and taken to your bed within a day or two. So I came.'

'With infinite delicacy sending your lacquey ahead to warn me—so that I should not be caught unprepared! Monsieur de Saint-Amand himself could not have shown more tact.' Her smile faded as she saw him wince and turn away. 'Forgive me. I know you are a hundred times sincerer. But can you wonder I take my revenge, after being doubted by you like this? Why should you think I was elaborately deceiving you? If we have not been faithful, at least we have been frank. When all our trouble began—when I had first had a caprice for Monsieur de Saint-Amand, did I not tell you plainly the first week? Why should you believe, on the word of a village *curé* and a rabble of Paris scandal-rakers, that I had grown so shiftless now?'

'Ah, what might not anyone do at a crisis like that? You might well have thought matters very little mended by telling me.'

'And then the man suspects me of a massacre of the innocent!—of being another Madame de Tencin, exposing another infant d'Alembert on the steps of the village church! And yet you came, though thinking so terribly ill of me, to shield my reputation before all these *honest* folk! No, there are not many in the world, Étienne, as honest as you.' Chin in hand, she looked at him and smiled. 'You surrendered at discretion, Monsieur: what can I do but release you, with my deepest gratitude? Will you stay to share an invalid's supper? Or' (and her voice chilled again with the

fear of seeming to impose herself on him) 'would you prefer the dining-room?'

'No, no, here if the invalid is well enough.' He sat down by the fire. 'Just as well,' she laughed, at ease again, 'that we got the explanations over first. It was all getting too like that dinner the Comte de Lauraguais gave the other day—did you hear?'

'No.'

'Consisting of all the people he could collect in Paris that stuttered.'

'The imbecile!'

'Oh, it was quite like us this evening. At first they were all furious—like a flock of turkeys gabbling—and the more furious, the worse they stuttered and the less they understood. Till suddenly they saw the joke; then it turned out a very successful evening, after all.'

He laughed; but he noted the sadness in her voice. He moved his chair nearer and picked up her book. *La Nouvelle Héloïse!*

'Yes,' she grimaced, '*The New Heloise*—for myself, I prefer the old. No doubt because I am getting so. For three years now I must have been the only person in France who hasn't read the book—or swum through it on a flood of tears.'

'It drew none from *me*. But then I was never romantic.'

'And I, you mean,' (she smiled sadly), 'only too much so? Perhaps Monsieur de Saint-Amand has cured me. And now I suppose I ought to spend my remaining leisure like our poor Queen, sitting in front of her beribboned skull of Ninon de l'Enclos and repenting at it. But at least,' she added defiantly, 'unlike the poor Queen, I have had some pleasure in life to repent of.' And then, feeling the remark was an ungracious one, she glanced at him quickly with a smile that was half-contrite and half-amused.

Elbows on the arms of his chair, chin on his clasped hands, he dwelt musing on her face—'You sound very unhappy, Hortense?'

Her pride recoiled from his pity. 'What use parading one's wounds? They only catch cold and ache the worse.' She rearranged the pillows at her back and sat up straighter. 'You were wiser, Étienne. Much safer, dealing with the dead. No mummied lady can deceive you—you are too expert: no coin of Cleopatra—you know a false one in a minute. The past cannot change. The dead cannot betray. You should never have married me—against all your father's reasons too!'

“Reasons”! Do you call it reasonable to see the whole world arranged in castes and grades like his own regiment? With no promotion allowed since the Flood? “Reasonable” to sneer at me for collecting antiques and curse me for not marrying one? He—he was as pigeon-witted as that insufferable Madame de Grignan; simpering, as she introduced her bourgeois daughter-in-law to her set, that “old lands need a little manure now and then.” Leave my father out of it. It was not because you were a banker’s daughter that we have not been happy, Hortense.’

‘Merely because I was a fool? Is that your polite meaning, Monsieur?’ She laughed. ‘Perhaps you are not far wrong. And yet, if you too had loved antiques a little less? And not tried to put me too in a glass-case.’

He started angrily to his feet. ‘You are *too* unjust, Hortense! Whatever my faults, *that* was not one. When you had your caprice for Monsieur de Saint-Amand, did I not let you go your way? As perhaps, since all is explained, I had better go mine.’ And he put out his hand for his hat. But she seized his wrist.

‘You misunderstand me, Étienne. Foolish to quarrel again now, about why we quarrelled then. Such are explanations! I did not mean that you were a Turk—no one was ever less so. I meant that you treated me like a precious Chinese porcelain added to your collection. Oh, it was charming of you. I was to do nothing but look exquisite; to be kept away from all the rough jolts and jars of life—I was too delicate and rare for those. Do you wonder that with so little to fill my head, I lost it? That with so little work, I began looking for amusement?’ He nodded, meeting her eyes as she gazed up at him. ‘And so your precious statue came to life, and suddenly walked out into the world of Paris, and got broken. Ah, Pygmalion, perhaps if you had only been a little *more* of a Turk . . . Sometimes I wonder if we aren’t all trying to be more reasonable than it’s reasonable to try to be. You were always such a perfect gentleman—just as in your coming here to-night. But even the most perfect ladies can be such women sometimes, you see. Why did you let me go so easily?’ She smiled a little mischievously.

‘Yes,’ he said, thoughtfully and absently sitting down, ‘no doubt, it was my fault too. We can agree now?—conclude our Three Years’ War, with a treaty that leaves in peace, just as it is, the desert we have made. Truly diplomatic.’ She laughed.

‘You laugh, Hortense. Still! At everything. You think all

the knots life cannot untie can still be cut with the edge of a laugh.'

'Better laugh than cry—it's so often a question of one or other. Though as one gets older, the laugh gets more edged. But don't pity me,' she went on after a moment. 'I have already been happier here than in Paris.'

'But what can you find to *do* here?—now!'

'I walk. I garden. I have one friend to write to—Louise. And I am also writing a romance, if you *must* know; they are less painful, I find, to write than to live. But no, *you* won't understand. Paris is so different for you. Sophie will rejoice to-morrow over her prodigal returned.'

'Sophie,' said Monsieur de Malitourn dryly, 'swore last night that if I came here to-day, she would never see me again.'

'And yet you came! Étienne! But I am sure it will be all right. She has probably sworn it all before.'

'True. She has.'

'She would be far likelier to do it, if she hadn't sworn to. She is jealous; and therefore in love with you.'

'Or with my purse.'

'Both, no doubt. These matters are seldom simple. But you must see that it was vastly provoking for her, to bring you this piece of information, so much to my discredit, and then find it produce exactly the wrong effect. Do you care for her so little?'

'She attracts me, and repels me. She amuses me. I pity, and like, and dislike her. I do not think, like Monsieur de Buffon, that "in love the physical alone is good." A great zoologist should be a better observer than that; he should have seen that love makes some people better and some, worse—angels and hyenas. But I have just kept my heart in a sling these three years. It has been a case, for me, of distractions and amusements. It works like a drug. One feels less lonely for the moment; lonelier after. It became, too, another form of collecting; only now I was collecting human hearts, human characters. After the dead, the living . . . So strange, so inexhaustibly various. One is not happy; but I chose to be unhappy and not bored; rather than bored but not unhappy. And yet if I had not always my treatise on ancient coins to go back to, I think I might have hanged myself. But why should you want to hear all this?'

'But of course it interests me, Étienne. Hearing of you from other people was, you may imagine, rather different; and less

pleasant. Hearing it from you, I too am "not happy, but not bored." But might not one person have made you happier than a series?—supposing you had taken your heart out of its sling? For surely, Étienne, it must have recovered by this?'

'Oh yes,' he said, a trifle coldly, rising and pacing away from the light. 'I did not suggest it was a bleeding heart. I am not romantic. It has grown stiff, that is all—and cautious.' He paused, then added, smiling slightly, with an assumption of tranquil irony: 'And it depends on the "one person."' That indeed was obvious; she had no comment. Yet there was something queer in his voice; a doubt shaped itself in her mind; was dismissed; sprang up again. She glanced at him. He smiled.

'Étienne?'

He took her hand. She looked up more searchingly into his face; then with the mocking light in her eyes again—'What, am I antique enough now to be worth adding to your collection?'

He laughed. 'Not "antique." Genuine.'

She felt his lips on her hand. He sat down on the bed. 'It reminds me,' he said, smiling.

'Of what?'

'Of Alexander the Great.'

'Alexander the Great!'

'Yes. A marble-head. The Comte de Caylus told me of it. The very thing I had always wanted, by his description. A genuine piece, of the finest period and style. In the manner of Lysippus. It had been in Paris a few years ago; then lost sight of. I pursued it everywhere, from dealer to dealer. A month ago my search was at last successful. I found it.'

'Where?'

'In my own collection! Need I expound the parable . . .?'

'Oh, I am to think myself as glorious a conquest as an Alexander, am I? And will it all last even as long as his did, I wonder? Well, Étienne, it does seem as if you rather needed someone—someone a little less absent-minded than you are growing? Or you will be advertising for yourself next—a lost man! So may-be—'

At that moment there was a loud sneeze outside the door. A moment more—and then a faltering knock. The door opened and disclosed a flushed Perrette, groping desperately all over her person for her handkerchief; only to catch sight of it at last on the floor outside. She came in, twisting it desperately, in search of an

explanation. She noticed that Monsieur de Malitourn withdrew a little self-consciously towards the fireplace. Then inspiration came. 'Please, Madame, they want to know, will Monsieur be staying to-night?'

Madame de Malitourn laughed. 'Why, Perrette, could you not hear well enough through the keyhole? Yes, Monsieur will stay. But *you* will not, if you play such pranks again. Be off with you!'

Perrette, seeing that there was no need to be more than half-abashed, still lingered, standing first on one foot, then on the other. 'If you please, Madame, there is one other thing.'

'Well?'

'If Madame could spare me for two hours to-morrow afternoon . . . ? Pierre wants to take me to the fair?'

'Why, yes. But you told me, only this morning, you did not want to go.'

Perrette smiled. 'Yes, Madame. But the weather's changed again.'

### *I SAW HER PASS.*

I saw her pass—  
She swept across our sky,  
Swift, one with the wind,  
And clean. Sweet, serious mouth,  
Clear eyes, a noble brow,  
And ministering hands.  
She did not stay.

Who was she? .  
Justice? Mercy? Peace?  
I cannot say,  
I only saw her pass—  
She did not stay.

MARJORIE E. PILLERS.

## *RUGBY IN THE EARLY 'EIGHTIES.*

BY H. G. D. LATHAM.

A SMALL boy from a preparatory school went with his father, who was home on leave from India, to visit an older brother at Rugby.

The sight of the snug studies, those quaint cabins whose dimensions would paralyse a sanitary reformer, where the Rugby boy of the earliest 'eighties made his home and his castle, presented an attraction which was absolutely irresistible.

It was summer time, and most of them were gay with flowered window-boxes; and the air of cosiness and comfort within contrasted vehemently with the bare boards and ink-stained desks of the class-room which was the shrine of lessons and recreation alike in the preparatory school.

Perhaps in the rebuilding of the Houses which has taken place during the last fifty years calculations as to breathing space and carbon dioxide have made themselves felt; in those days the School Doctor stood alone for hygiene. He it was who insisted upon flannel trousers being worn for football, and secured the provision of hot coffee and biscuits for those who rose in time for them before chapel on winter mornings. (In the summer milk, generally sour, was substituted.) But he had to wrench reforms from Conservatism one by one.

Doubtless their very smallness added to the charm of those studies. They offered suggestions of cosy winter evenings, and an entirely false dream that to do Latin verses and Greek translations would be a delightful occupation in such cells of learning. The youngster implored his father to send him to Rugby without delay; and, perhaps against his better judgment, his father consented. It is not, in most cases, wise policy to plunge a child not yet thirteen years old into the world of a Public School.

The next term saw the new boys arrive a day or two before the rest to sit for the Entrance Examination. This gave them time to get their bearings before the rush. A further fortnight's grace was theirs before they were subjected to fagging or to compulsory games and sports, in which time they were expected to pick up the traditions of the School and of the House.

During your first term, for instance, you might not at any time put your hands in your pockets, except to extract or return some necessary article. In your second term you might keep one hand in your pocket at a time. If you were walking in the town with a companion of your own House you must link on, i.e. walk arm in arm; but it was anathema to link on with a boy from another House. Under no circumstances might you turn up your trousers, or wear stuck-up collars, for these and such-like things were 'putting it on,' and offenders were curtly told to 'take it off,' the lesson being sternly enforced.

Your fifth term admitted you to the position of being 'In Hall,' which meant that you had the run of the House dining hall when it was out of use. Some of the big fellows used to sit there round the fire, or would cluster round the piano to sing choruses. In your fifth term you had the further privilege of wearing the House colours on your hat; and in later terms you wore them in different combinations, such as a twist, or a varied width of stripe, so as to distinguish your seniority at a glance.

Only Swells were exempt from these traditions. They might, and did, link on with boys of other Houses, and walk unlinked with boys of their own House. They wore the highest of high collars, and the loudest of loud corduroy waistcoats, and ties with vast horse-shoe pins. Black was *de rigueur* for coats and ties (and in strict law for waistcoats too, but Authority turned a blind eye on occasion), but trousers offered an opportunity to the Swell of which he was not slow to avail himself. Once the head of our House appeared on the first Sunday of term in trousers of a pattern that seemed to speak for itself. By a most unhappy coincidence a much smaller boy, with no pretensions as yet to Swelldom, had returned from the holidays with a Sunday pair of trousers of identical pattern. It was a cruel blow to the head of the House.

At Sunday afternoon Chapel the younger boys were prompt to be in their places as soon as ever the bell began to toll. A little later came those who were no longer small fry—boys of the Upper School, boys of the House Eleven, or the House Twenty. Last of all, as the three-minute bell began, the Swells rolled in with massive dignity. In their wake, like fishing boats under the convoy of a Super-Dreadnought, flowed tides of younger fellows, who, for some reason or other, were behind their proper time. For them to venture up the nave unescorted during the last bell would have been 'side,' a thing to be taken off, and a punishable offence.



These 'Swells,' who and what were they? Not necessarily scholars, not necessarily in the Sixth, not necessarily gentlemen. They were the athletes of the House, footballers in the School Fifteen, or those who had gained their 'Caps'—the velvet and silver-lace caps conferred on the best football players in each House, good cricketers, and the like.

At breakfast and tea they occupied the table at the centre of the Hall where the House-Master and his family sat at dinner. The Swells' table had the right to use fags to make toast, and to send them down town (regardless of their own meal) for desired luxuries. Otherwise a Swell, as such, had no power of fagging others, unless he were in the Sixth, or had received Sixth-power; but of course he was exempt from being fagged. Other boys were liable to service till they reached the Upper School.

'Sixth-power,' as its name implies, was the authority conferred by the House-Master upon certain Swells whose intellectual attainments were not proportionate to their athletic attainments. The House-Master selected such of these as he (often quite wrongly) believed to possess moral force and standing, and gave them the authority which automatically devolved upon the Sixth Form in administering the discipline of the House.

When the fortnight's grace had expired the new boys were supposed to know all about everything and everybody, and to be aware that to whistle up and down the passages, or to make yourself conspicuous in the town or in the Close, or to forget for an instant that the mere fact that you were cock of the walk at your preparatory school did not count at Rugby, or to break any other unwritten law would assuredly attract a well-placed boot, or a knobly cane; and they were merged in the current of school life, in its fagging, its games, its sports.

Each fag had his set of duties to one Sixth Form boy, or to a boy with Sixth-power, to whom he was either Study Fag or Toast Fag, besides a general duty of obedience to any member of the Sixth.

A toast fag had to cut, and toast to a nicety, two rounds of bread at breakfast and tea for his master before sitting down to his own refreshment; but he had the compensating privilege of being allowed to make toast for himself and his friends. So the huge fire in the hall was faced twice daily in the season by a half-circle of toasting and toasted fags. A study fag was responsible for sweeping, cleaning, dusting, and generally house-maiding his master's study, and for keeping his fire alight.

Every boy, the Sixth excepted, was responsible for the order and cleanliness of his own study ; and it was a common sight to see shovels full of hot coals being carried from study to study on winter afternoons to relight extinct fires, and a common odour to smell melting candle-ends, and the dusters which were burning in the attempt to draw up the flames. That the House was not burned down is a marvel. In these days, perhaps, the rising tide of science and comfort has brought electric light and radiators into Rugby studies.

A grim notice always appeared on the Hall door at the beginning of term, announcing the amount of the House subscriptions. These were levied on every boy, and went to the support of House and School games and sports. They constituted a severe tax. It seemed untold wealth to return to School jingling the change of a sovereign of pocket-money ; but by the time the House subscription was paid, you wondered ruefully how to settle last term's tick at Hobley's or Wells', and how to subsist on the weekly allowance of a shilling, which had an unfortunate habit of being stopped for some communal cause just when you wanted it most.

There was another less creditable leakage from the pocket at the beginning of term.

Certain big fellows of the baser sort would survey their studies on returning, select such ornaments as were broken, and such pictures as had become wearisome, and offer them for sale at exorbitant prices to new-comers and small boys. There could be no legal compulsion in such cases ; but the sales were unfailingly accomplished. It is satisfactory to add that this scandal was stopped before the middle 'eighties.

The new-comer began to reap the benefit of the House subscription after his first fortnight.

He had the run, in his turn, of the School Racquets, Fives, and Tennis Courts, and his share, willy-nilly, in the House games.

There can be no question that compulsion in School games is an excellent thing. It enforces valuable discipline ; it makes for sound bodies when the first stiffness has worn off ; it keeps boys from slacking and growing over-gross. If they have natural aptitudes for one game or another, they speedily shine ; if not—at any rate they get good exercise, and learn cheerful obedience to authority. But there should be classification. Boys should play with boys of their own strength. If a child of thirteen is sent into the scrummage with young men of eighteen he will certainly

funk, and, as certainly, be kicked for funking ; and the process will not steel his nerve. If he plays with others of his own weight, he will learn to play up and to like the game.

Cricket, football, house-runs, and paper-chases were the routine.

Football was, of course, played under Rugby rules, though Association football began to appear early in the 'eighties. House-runs were runs along the winter roads—a dreary job, but good training. Paper-chases were cross-country runs conducted under discipline. The hares laid the trail and set the jumps, and the pack followed after an interval. As each jump was reached the big fellows took it easily. The rest followed in informal order of size and jumping power, till a tail of small boys came to grief one after the other. If anyone were sufficiently winded by a bad fall, or sufficiently soaked at a water jump, he was dismissed to find his way home. Quite a fine art could be developed in falling heavily, or in getting thoroughly soaked, without apparent intention. On the whole paper-chases stand out in memory as the most unpleasant things in the orthodox routine of the Rugby of those days. The heart still sinks at the recollection of the scrap of paper on the House door notifying a paper-chase for the afternoon, especially if it was at Clifton brook. The Clifton brook course was the thorniest and wettest of all.

But they had their value. From them and from other austerities we learned in our bones that if a thing has to be done it has to be done, and that it had better be done at once and uncomplainingly. There is nothing to be gained, and much to be lost, by postponing and expostulating. The Swells were an excellent substitute for Fate.

There was, in those days, no exaggerated worship of athletics at Rugby. The great footballers and cricketers and runners received the respect that was their due ; but so did the scholar, and the good pianist, and singer. The rank and file worked off their games as they worked off their lessons, and for the same reason. The chief difference was that the compulsion in games was infinitely more difficult to circumvent than the compulsion of sound learning, for it was exercised by boys, not by masters.

It is a commonplace that a system depends for its working upon those who work it, and upon an indefinable spirit. The Rugby system had a tradition of hardness, and rested upon the large powers vested in the boys themselves. The Sixth Form had considerable authority, and a legal right to enforce it with the cane.

The Swells saw to it that the unwritten law was observed, and that he who put on 'side' should take it off, and that quickly. So far, so good. But what of the background?

The two things which a wise man would probe in estimating the character of any school are the prevalence or otherwise of bullying, and the moral atmosphere of the place.

These things varied in different Houses, according to the House-Master. In the House of which these things are written the House-Master was a splendid Christian gentleman, a good disciplinarian, a man of great experience, one who was feared for his firmness, admired for his uprightness, and loved for himself. He kept himself to his own private residential part of the House, and did not come familiarly or at unexpected times into the boys' studies and quarters. If a boy wished to see him he must go to the House-Master's study, or else seek him in Hall at the time of evening Preparation. Probably his motive was one of shrinking from anything remotely connected with *espionage*, a generous confidence. The result was that he knew nothing about the inner life of the House. To make matters worse, he trusted implicitly the wrong boys. It is not surprising that bullying was rampant, and the moral tone horribly low.

In the earliest 'eighties (a powerful reform set in later) the Sixth in the House were not a strong body. The House was ruled by the Swells of the day, and these, with their satellites, carried on the official bullying almost as a religion. The half-hour in the big bedroom was a time of terror to many.

More crude, though less severe and less chronic, was bullying by fellows who were not Swells yet, but would probably become so in the next School-generation. To be bullied by a Swell twice your size and weight, with the prestige of the Eleven or Fifteen upon him, might be painful, but was not necessarily degrading unless it took a disgusting form. (The writer remembers seeing and suffering obscenities for which the perpetrators deserved to be shot like vermin.) To be bullied by a lad only a little bigger than yourself, but sufficiently stronger to make resistance vain, inflicted a cruel wound on self-respect.

The moral tone of the House was vile. Pictures out of the past come into the mind. A group of Swells standing at one end of the big bedroom, competing with each other in the pleasant pastime of trying to put out the candle at the end of the room by spitting into the flame. A boy knocking at the door of a fag's study, and

finding a group of half a dozen crowded there, listening to one of their number as he read aloud from one of the most poisonous books of the seventeenth century, which had somehow crept into the School Library, where curious eyes or sheer bad luck had found it. The common talk was foul exceedingly. Ignorance was impossible. Innocence was difficult. Yet there were many who kept themselves unspotted from even such a world; and it is a testimony to the inherent force of goodness that they were tacitly respected, though they lived somewhat lonely lives.

The different Houses varied in this matter. Those were best where the House-Master grasped the nettle, and was about his House at all hours, so that no deed of darkness could easily escape his eye. But it would be difficult to imagine a more disastrous atmosphere for any child passing into and through adolescence than that which pervaded some of the Houses of those days.

Now and then boys were expelled, being convicted of beastliness of the vilest kind. But the beastliness went on, and was a subject for amused conversation in the School.

Enough of such matters.

Perhaps the jolliest time of the week was a Winter Saturday night. Lessons for Monday had, or had not, been prepared on Friday, and Saturday evening was free. Football was over earlier in the day. The Swells had refreshed themselves with hot baths after the muddy game; the rest had been content to wash face and hands at cold-water basins, for the days of hygiene had not yet reached the schools, or at least Public Schools. The study curtains were drawn, candles and fires blazed, and most studies were busily occupied with picnics. Cocoa, and such eatables as funds and credit would allow, made a pleasant feast. It was a happy, friendly hour.

Sometimes more illicit pleasures were indulged in. The writer remembers clubbing with a few others to buy a bottle of distinctly bad sherry, to be consumed behind bolted doors. To the delight of the rest he seemed to have exceeded the bounds of strict moderation. When the prayer-bell sounded, and all trooped into the Hall, they waited for the House-Master to detect some suspicious lurching walk. They were disappointed. The rioter had been careful to riot within safe limits, and there was no catastrophe.

The official food supply of the House was not good. It was the recognised thing in those days that those who liked jam with their breakfast, or potted meat at tea, should supply such luxuries

for themselves. When funds permitted there was never a penny so well laid out as the penny spent at Jeffrey's opposite the School Gate on a diminutive hot roll on the way home to breakfast after the first lesson for the day. Chapel was at seven, and was followed by school from a quarter-past seven to a quarter-past eight. By half-past eight on a cold winter morning hunger had set in, and these hot rolls were fit for the gods.

Dinner was a fearful rush for the tail of the House. The House-Master and his family sat in kindly state at the Swells' table, and were served in peace. The Swells, banished for this meal to other places, came next. The pace grew hotter and hotter from table to table, and by the time the fiftieth boy had received his portion his elders and betters were looking round impatiently to see who was delaying the progress of events. Five minutes of actual business was all that a small boy got out of the time devoted to dinner.

It is not wonderful that growing lads spent every farthing available in the pocket, or to credit, on 'stodging,' as it was called, between meals. Mid-term hampers were welcome indeed. The fortunate receiver conveyed his treasure stealthily to his study, and invited a few chosen friends to share his luck. But somehow the secret was never safely kept, and an uninvited Swell or two dropped in to patronise the feast. It was one of the privileges of Swelldom.

Rugby was, of course, the cradle of the finest form of football. Matthew Bloxham, lecturing in the early 'eighties on 'Rugby School, Seventy years ago' (thus easily does a century pass), remembered its origin in his own schooldays. Then, when only the dribbling game was known, a big fellow once took it into his head to pick up the ball and run with it. Had a small boy done the same thing, he would have been kicked, and the idea would have been barren.

There were three historic matches played in the winter term, and each of them attracted large numbers of old Rugbeians to play, and to see the old School again. There might be a hundred or so playing on each side, so that there was more pageant than science about the game.

On such occasions the crowd of spectators was kept back from encroaching on the ground not only by stakes and cords, but by sentries in the shape of the Sixth (or such of them as were not playing), armed with canes, which they plied severely on the offending shinbones of too-eager spectators. Only one looker-on

could face them unflinching. He was a town boy, with a wooden leg. This he placed before him, and so he stood his ground.

Before each of these matches there was a bestowal of 'Caps.' The best players in each House were granted the privilege of wearing on occasion velvet caps trimmed with silver lace and adorned with the House crest, of which they were justifiably proud. (They had, also, the more practical advantage of being entitled to wear knickerbockers and thick woollen jerseys for football and cross-country runs, instead of long trousers and thin cotton jerseys.) For half an hour or so before the great matches the 'Caps,' past and present, marched in fours, gathered, according to their Houses, up and down the cloisters which run round two sides of the Quad, while the rest of the School looked on enviously. 'Morituri te salutant'—well, no. The days of deliberate hacking were over by the early 'eighties, though we remember a special pair of boots, with specially thick soles, being bought by an enthusiast for a particularly exciting House match. But the 'Caps' received the same homage that the Roman crowd bestowed upon the gladiators.

When a boy had won this honour it was notified to him by a letter handed to him by the head of the House Twenty, with a word of congratulation, at tea-time. Instantly the House broke into applause, and every boy thumped the table with his knife or his plate till enough crockery to celebrate the event had perished. Then business was resumed. Afterwards everybody congratulated the new Swell, saluting him with the formula 'Allow me,' at their next meeting, to which salutation he responded with modest pride. He, for his part, had the privilege of providing a succulent cake of the largest kind, to be fairly and honestly divided between the occupants of his dormitory at bedtime.

'House Cheering' was a strange custom. Once a week for the last three weeks of the Christmas term the whole House turned out into the courtyard before prayers. The Head of the House called in earnest tones for three cheers for the Head-Master and his wife. Taking the time from him, as the party took it from the mottle-faced gentleman in drinking to Mr. Pell, the House very slowly and with unction roared, 'H-i-i-i-p, H-i-i-i-p, H-i-i-i-p, Hurrah.' Equally solemn cheers resounded for the House-Master and his wife, for the House-Tutor and his wife, and for one or two other dignitaries. At the end the proceedings might become a little relaxed, cheers being invited for popular members of the House, and so the function ended. Across the still night air came

the rhythm of 'H-i-i-i-p, H-i-i-i-p, H-i-i-i-p, Hurrah' from other Houses. Perhaps the cheers grew cheerier as the holidays drew nearer.

A day or two before the holidays each boy sent in his demand for journey money; and each boy pitched his demand as high as possible. There followed a contest of wits with the House-Master, who had a nasty habit of verifying railway fares in the official publications, and of knowing what cab fares ought to amount to. It was part of the House code that anything that you could screw out as your journey money over and above the absolutely necessary expenses involved in travelling was a lawful perquisite, to be used in settling the term's ticks, or in providing for the holidays. It never occurred to any but the most sensitively conscientious that there was anything dubious in the matter.

The new relations of friendship which seem to have sprung up between masters and boys in schools nowadays had scarcely begun to dawn fifty years ago. It was a master's business to drive boys through their work, and to drive knowledge into them. It was equally a boy's business to get off as easily as he could. (At least, this feeling prevailed in the lower and middle parts of the School. In the higher forms there was scholarship and the love of it.) If a master was a strong man, he ruled. If not, the boys ruled. If a master could be 'boshed' his life was made unendurable. Yet there were one or two masters who succeeded in leaving the impression that sound and accurate scholarship is desirable in itself, an impression which remains in after years in the form of admiration for attainments in others which can never be reached by those of us who lost the opportunities which once were ours.

A few of the masters were before their time, and hold a place in grateful memory as having laid themselves out to be friends to their pupils, and not merely pedagogues. There was a mathematical master who took boys out on half-holidays for natural history studies in the rich neighbourhood, and spent freely in their service the ripe knowledge for which he was (and perhaps is) more famous outside the narrow world of school than within its borders.

Two others came to be form-masters in the same term, and set themselves to create a new tradition. One of the two soon left to become Head-Master of another Public School; the other broke down in health. But they founded a new order of things, and their influence lived on.



Are their names remembered? It is strange how the passing stream washes out the memory of famous men. Arnold, of course, was a great name, thanks, chiefly, to Tom Hughes; but most of us would have been puzzled to say why Temple should have the School Library and Museum named after him.

Occasionally we caught a tartar. A new Chemistry master arrived one term, and speculation was aroused as to his personal equation. His first class went in to put matters to the test. His second class met them as they came out. Their faces showed what was to be expected. In private, and in quiet hours spent over weird experiments in the laboratory, he was a delightful companion. In class he knew that somebody was going to be top-sawyer, and he had, and left, no manner of doubt who it was to be.

Legend tells that in later days there were two other masters at the School, one of whom was rather a dandy, and the other somewhat corpulent. The wits of the School nicknamed the three 'The world, the flesh, and the devil.' Unhappily the *mot* came to S.'s ears. 'The devil, eh? They shall find me so this term.' They did.

Thus in various ways the minds and bodies of boys were educated and disciplined, their morals and their manners made or marred, and their behaviour reduced to pattern. Their souls, too, were cared for.

There was morning chapel each weekday at seven. The first bell began at ten minutes before the hour, and the latest sluggard shot out of bed at the sound. The house was three minutes' run from chapel, and the penalty for being late and locked out was two hundred Latin lines. Dressing, including washing, was hasty on occasion. The cold-bath habit was as yet unknown except to a few enthusiasts. As a rule, the chapel bell gave two or three minutes' grace, ringing on beyond the hour. But at odd times it stopped punctually, to the great discomfiture of those who had presumed once too often.

On Sunday mornings there was what was called 'Lecture,' a Greek Testament lesson for the higher forms, and a Bible lesson for the youngsters (neither of which aroused great enthusiasm), followed by service in chapel.

Confirmation was administered once a year in chapel. The chief feeling on looking back on it is that it was the opportunity of a life-time wasted—wasted, not so much by the boys, as by their

teachers. Boys have an intensely religious and devotional side to their natures ; but it is not reached by a series of lectures, or by a single interview *ad hoc* with the House-Master, and another with the Head-Master, to whom it might be unwise to disclose dangerous secrets. Unless masters have special gifts of spirituality and sympathy they should leave the preparation for Confirmation in other hands.

Sunday afternoon in chapel was at four o'clock, a sleepy hour on winter afternoons, and a tantalising hour in the summer.

At this service the Head-Master usually preached, almost invariably taking his text from one of the Epistles to the Corinthians, while the School settled down to rest. In later years the writer had the privilege of hearing the Doctor preach in the Cathedral where he had become Dean, after rendering great services to his school in difficult days. With maturer experience it was a pleasure to listen to him ; but he was not a good preacher to young boys.

No, the chapel was not the centre and inspiration of School life. It was a part of School routine, and too closely identified with School discipline. And yet tears rise in the heart and gather to the eyes in the remembering of certain chapel scenes, as if to show what a School Chapel might be.

Founder's Day was always marked by the singing of the Anthem, 'Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us.' When an old Rugbeian hears that passage read he is back in his place once more, standing by some who became the fathers of the school to be, and by more who have no memorial ; who, so far as the School is concerned, are perished as though they had not been, and are become as though they had never been born.

And memory is poignant in recalling the last Sunday of term with its closing hymn, 'Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing.'

All who were to come back the next term sang the first part of the closing verse :

'Let Thy father-hand be shielding  
All who here shall meet no more ;  
May their seed-time past be yielding  
Year by year a richer store ;'

Then these stood silent, while a lesser volume of sound from all who were leaving responded like an echo :

'Those returning  
Make more faithful than before.'

*FAREWELL AND ADIEU TO YOU.*

BY ELISABETH CLUER.

It's queer I should think of him to-night, and I cannot guess why, but I saw his face, sudden, across the firelight; and there was only Jim in the room, and myself, and the shadows. Jim would not mind me of him, sitting there with the paper, his big face all crumpled because he won't go to an eye-doctor, and his hands—it wasn't him. I'm not afraid of shadows either, and it isn't often I think long now, there's no time for it with children at your skirts. But however it was, I saw him, as I do always when I remember it, with that wary look—cat and mouse is all I can call it—watching: only the mice were dangerous. The firelight was on his face, too: it might be that.

I saw him very plain to-night: as it might be in Croskery's hut in that past February, firelight only to show his face, and the room full of people watching him out of the shadows. He could see them, too: they each made certain of that, the way his eyes moved, counting. Only me he couldn't see: or I hoped not. I was watching behind the men, praying he wouldn't see me, and they wouldn't remember, in the press of the moment. He'd shut the door behind him, not wanting to be caught that way, and all I could see was his face. Pale it was, even in the firelight, and narrow so that the cheek-bones showed, and very still. Only his eyes did the searching; and they were quiet too, having lost the laughter he put to things as a rule: quiet like a deep pond with the sun gone down. That was what frightened me most.

I'd been frightened all along, though: hating my part in it, for I'd served his mother from a girl, and only left when Jim wanted me nearer him, till we could marry. He said it was that, and I took it, for it was what I wanted then. But I'd liked her, and her easy ways, and the garden that you could stand in and see over to Foyle and the big ships standing off Derry city. She was a pleasant woman, Rake Gillespie's mother. She took things easier than some: even her children's mad ways. Jane then, when I left, was still at school; but Rake (Rod she called him),

even then he was at home when he thought of it only—as you might come in for a meal and be off again. His mother smiled at it: I think now she knew more than she let others. He would be in for a day, putting things to rights in the stables or the garrets, and then off again on that deafening bicycle of his, and everything to clear up against his coming again.

I never heard where he got his name. He was christened Roderick, but the whole of Derry called him Rake, and he'd a look of it, by the mere speed he took the roads at, rather than any ways with girls. Jim said it was just his look gave him the name. He was always pleasant to me, the little I saw of him. He'd come and stand in the kitchen doorway, hands on the side-posts, just stand and watch; and his eyes'd smile at you, though there wasn't a laugh to his mouth. He'd a trick, because he was short, of looking up at you, sideways. 'Mary,' he'd say, 'it's a great blow-out I want to-day. I've a hundred-and-fifty mile ride in front of me. You'll give me that?' he'd say with the little sideways thrust of his chin. You remembered his ways.

He wasn't above five and a half feet, and he'd a square small figure; yet I never saw anyone move easier, lightlier; he was there, or not, and you'd see him or not, as he chose: like a cat, stalking. It never worried me; he could have made as much noise as most folks if he'd wanted, but he chose not; or so I took it. He never got a jump out of me, though maybe he wanted to: I couldn't say. I wasn't going to let him, I knew that. The last time I saw him before I left, I was hanging up clothes in the far end of the paddock. Mrs. Gillespie hated a laundry made of her garden. I'd a peg in my mouth and a towel rolled up under my arm, and suddenly he was there, standing between me and the sunlight, standing quite still and watching me. Not smiling, even his eyes, just then. He stood there for a minute, watching me; and all tumbled and damp as I felt from the washing, and untidy with the wind, I wasn't going to show him I minded. Only he stepped forward and put a hand on my arm.

'I hear you're leavin', Mary,' says he. I nodded, my mouth full of the clothes-peg.

'Yu'd never do that?' says he, like gentling a horse. 'Yu'd never leave Foyle, Mary Connellan? What'll I do without ye?' says he, and not a bit of meaning in his face as he said it.

'Ye'll do what you've always done, I'm thinking,' I told him; 'go on your night ploys and want a big meal when you come in

from them——’ I stopped, because his grip on me tightened. His voice was the same though, deep and quiet.

‘Ye’ll keep my night ploys, as yu please to call them, off your tongue, Mary, here or there,’ he said. I moved, but he took no notice. ‘D’ye know that? Y’ll keep a still tongue, Mary, even though you’re goin’.’

I don’t know why it was: he must have meant to warn me: certain it is he told me nothing. But I felt, standing there with his grip on my wrist, as if he’d told me something secret, something to be between us two. I’d a little shiver at it down my spine. Yet I knew then as well as I know now, I was no more to him than the sand at Foyle mouth is to the sea that’s washed it away—there’s always more. I moved again, and he took his hand from my wrist. There was a mark, and I looked at it a minute before I answered him. When I did I lifted my eyes and looked him in the face, noting the deep eyes he had, and the still mouth of him.

‘I’ll remember,’ I said then. ‘I’ll not forget, Rake Gillespie.’

He laughed, but he stood a minute before he went, while I finished hanging out the clothes. I knew that, though I couldn’t tell which way he went when he did go, he was so quiet, and indeed I was not watching.

It was not a week after that I left for my new place in Donegal; away to the south on the border of Tyrone it was. I didn’t like leaving Mrs. Gillespie, but I was glad enough to be within a mile of Jim, and in a place you could get to Mass of a Sunday. There wasn’t a chapel in miles of Derryveagh. But where I was now, Ballinagra they call it, there was chapel and priest and maybe a server on feast-days. I liked that. I’m northern born, but there’s no Protestant blood to me, and it’s easier to keep old ways when others are keeping them. My new mistress was Catholic too, a McGrath out of Wicklow, and easy to me on that account. She knew, for the matter of that, I was for marrying, and she’d give me time enough to meet Jim of an evening. It would have been all clover, but for the Crossness.

The Troubles, most of them called it. Jim was thick in it, and I, being young and foolish, egged him on. It was a good cause enough, I’ll not deny that: but somehow now I’ve my house and the children round me, it seems a big foolishness—risking the man you love for any cause when you’ve no means of being sure them at the top will keep their word. There’s many, below,

broke theirs : and how would it be otherwise, seeing the way life pulls you ? I near as nothing broke mine ; small thanks to myself I did not. At the time I risked my share of Jim willing enough : it seemed the glory was worth it—for I always loved Jim. Now I've more to lose, I doubt I'd not do it.

Not but what Jim was moderate. He took what they gave us, when it came to the Treaty in '22. I called it decent of them. Jim thought it less than that, but, he said, you couldn't push them too far : best to take what's offered. Not, of course, that he'd any say in the matter—but he might have stayed Republican, as some did, and not for the new State. Maybe he thought of marrying and didn't want to wait again as we'd waited already, till things should straighten out. Anyway, we were willing to take what we'd got, seeing Donegal came into it, and Jim was planning to stay with the Boyds at Ballinagra, seeing they offered him good terms. It should have been easy.

But it was just there that the pinch came. At the time I thought it was all to do with the fighting—the Irregulars, the do-or-die Republicans. I thought it was all politics worried me, and I'd be still when I'd married Jim and we were quiet again. I'd grown scared, underneath, of carrying—what I used to carry—from place to place, on dark nights : it wasn't like me, so I thought I'd be glad of marriage and a turfstack of my own. I think now, it was something else worried me.

I'd grown used to the fear they had, at Croskery's (we met there, often enough), of a Night Rider they used to speak of. More than once he'd put their plans to nothing, dashing through with some message against them. No ambush seemed to catch him—he'd always know of it and come another way. They could not frighten him off the district. Once he'd been on their side, only working farther north : but now he'd stayed Republican, and knew their dodges of old, and they unable to think of new. I grew to fear him too, queer enough, just because, they said, you'd never tell where you'd happen on him. Men had waited for him behind every bohireen in the county, only to see his tail-light whisking beyond rifle-shot. He rode a motor-bicycle, like most of the messengers that dared risk it ; but he was the last in those parts : it was too easy heard. His, they said, you'd never seem to hear till it was past you. The men got superstitious about it, far more than the girls. I laughed at them, myself, but inside me a sort of fear grew. I wanted to see this Night Rider. They

called him the Rider. If they mentioned him by name I never heard it, it was under the breath, and they crossing themselves as you might at the Devil. I got curious about him, wondered if he were young or old, and kind or cruel. The men told such tales of him you could never be sure one was true.

I found out, in the end, in a way I didn't want. It's true the men (all but Jim) were a bit inclined to put such jobs on to the girls: they thought it a clever ploy. I didn't. Not that I minded what I had to do: Father Mulligan gave me absolution for it, in the Cause: but just because the men couldn't have done it, it worried me. They didn't ask much of me that way: they knew Jim and I were to marry: and indeed, most men are fools if you take them easy, and I'd not been loth, before I knew Jim. That made it the odder, that they should choose me for this particular thing. I was a little puzzled, too, at Jim. He seemed not to mind my being in it. Maybe it was the desperate need they had to get rid of the Rider.

For it was him they wanted me to decoy. They told me of it at Croskery's, sitting round the table they'd pulled up to the turfs, all of them eager and hot-faced, watching me to see if I'd do it. I didn't watch them much, for I'd a queer, angry feeling inside me that I couldn't account for, and I hated to be angry except for the Cause: it spoilt your work, somehow. So I sat listening to them, twisting a bit of my hair that had come down, and looking at the floor. Jim didn't say much at first, it was Croskery and Braun begged me to take it on.

'It'll not be the first you've caught where we couldn't, Mary,' says Braun. 'Let you think on the big deed it will be for Ireland. You need but tell a bit of tale, and you crying a bit——'

'Aye, and your hair down, maybe, and you saying there's murder in it.'

'Will a Rider stop for murder?' said I, cold.

'When it's you crying it, Mary Connellan,' says Craig, very cunning. I sat quiet a little, thinking. They wanted me to stop this Rider; cry out on him for help against someone murdering my lover—Jim, if I liked: bring him to the hut. They'd see to the rest, they said.

'Well,' I said, 'it will be murder,' and I laughed a little.

'You know well it's a debt, and him ruining the county with us never able to get him,' says Croskery. 'You've done as much before.'

'I've never brought a man to his death,' said I.

'Indirect, you have,' said Croskery. I couldn't deny it, and it took me by the throat when I saw I couldn't. They went on talking at me, over and over.

'How'll I know where he's coming, if you don't?' said I.

'Ye'll have to try more than once, if he doesn't come,' Croskery said. 'But we think for certain it'll be the Glenshane Road, under Loher Pass, and ten o'clock. And will Mrs. O'More let you out?'

'She will,' Jim answered for me. 'It's only a month to our marryin', and Mary's not just her servant now.'

I was surprised Jim wanted me to do it; generally he'd rather they picked any other girl. I put it to him.

'You're willing enough, Jim,' I said. 'Is it you are tired of me? Suppose I go off with the Rider, 'stead of getting him shot?'

Jim smiled, the slow easy way he has. I love him for it, but just then I could have hit him.

'I'll trust ye, lass,' he said. 'I'll guess no Rider'll take ye from me now. Won't ye do it, girl?'

He was too eager, it seemed to me, and I chanced to look up at the men. They were watching me, all of them, not as if they were hopeful—but as if they were sure: as if I'd got to do this. That angered me.

'What'll ye do if I don't?' I said, sitting straight.

They looked at each other. Jim, I saw, lifted his eyebrows. Croskery nodded.

'Ye can tell her. Maybe it's best.'

'It's this way, girl,' said Jim, slow. 'You're the only girl for the job, because—because ye know the Rider. He'll think you on his side.'

I stared at him. 'Won't he know more of me than that?' I said, puzzled. 'How d'you mean, I know him? I've never even seen his light.'

Jim smiled a little. 'No,' he said, 'but ye're after knowing him, all the same.' He stuck there, then cleared his throat and got it out. 'His name's Rake Gillespie.'

I could not have spoken: for the minute my tongue was dry, and all the anger that was in me boiled in my throat till I felt choking. I had no real thoughts at all, but it seemed to me that I had been waiting for this. I was suddenly afraid of the Rider, because I knew him: I even thought I had known, all along. It



was easy to see why they wanted me to trick him, easy. He'd trust me, not knowing my doings in Ballinagra: he'd think me honest. Oh, but I was angry: that they should put this on to me! I nearly cried out there and then that I could not do it, I had known his mother, and she good to me. That was why, of course, for he was nothing to me—only she'd always been kind, and he no less. As I thought it, though, I thought, quick and sly: if I refuse, they'll give it another girl, and she'd not save him. I swear I had not thought of saving him, till I thought those words: and then it flashed on me, how could I do it, and he the Rider? But oh, how could I not?

Jim was talking again, persuading me. He'd say one thing, and I'd be thinking another. It went queerly, and my head was jumbled with it, yet through it all I saw one thing only: Rake Gillespie, and he facing the guns. It went like this:

*Jim* (aloud): Do it, for God's sake, Mary. It's our last chance of getting him, and he a rebel villain.

*Me* (to myself): Sure the dear knows, how'll I do it?

*Jim*: Can ye not see, it is your plain duty?

*Me*: Duty, to be murdering her boy?

*Jim*: I would trust you further than that, Mary.

*Me*: I'll not trust any of ye.

*Jim*: He's killed enough of us. Say you'll do it, girl.

*Me*: I'll have to kill him—or save him—I can't let another.

Then I grew afraid they could see my thoughts, and with that, desperate, I said Yes, I'd do it. Would they tell me when and how, and let me get to it.

You could hear the sigh they all let out, as if they said, Thanks be to God, she'll do it. I saw then how troubled they were in it, and how I'd be saving the country a deal, to be killing him—Rake. As Croskery said, I'd done as much before; and I'd not see the killing. God knows how many mothers' sons we'd killed, one side and another: but it wasn't, in Ballinagra, like two armies at each other, but neighbours and friends just parted on either side. It came over me, just then, how the whole was a waste, in whatever cause. But somewhere at the back of my mind, I'd a clear purpose, and I talked sensibly, I think, asking them how I'd do it. Murder, I said, would be no use; I must show I knew him and was expecting him; he wouldn't believe in the chance of my calling for help and he coming. That bothered them, till

I hit on it—I would stop him, I said, showing I knew him : he would not ride down a girl and she unarmed ; and I would say, there was a man wounded, in the hut, and calling on Rake, and I could not get him moved, for there were Free State men all round the ditches. I would get him to come to the hut, and then I would slip out the back way and leave them to it. All the while I was talking, one half of me was thinking, clear and strong, how I would do it as I said : and the other was fighting to see a way out of it, even after I'd said I'd do it. They took my plan, and I went home at that, my head going round with the thoughts I had, and no rest to them.

I had thought at first I would tell Rake the truth, and get him to go back for that night : but it seemed to me, thinking over it, I could not do that. It would tell him so much to take back to his headquarters—tell him of Jim and Ballinagra and the men waiting against them. It would likely mean a whole raid on Ballinagra, and I did not want Jim shot, he had come through enough.

I did not want Rake killed either, but it seemed the better of the two, for Ireland as well as for me : which was a nice sort of way to put it. I turned the thing round and round in my head all night, and was so tired with the puzzle of it, in the morning, I could not think any more, but let things go how they would. It seemed my duty to snare Rake that night ; I could not see it otherwise, and I giving my word : but I prayed, waiting at the Lohar cross-roads that night, that he'd not come, never come that way, or that something would save him, because I could not. A strange man had been bad enough, but Rake Gillespie I knew. 'Ye'll keep a still tongue, Mary,' he'd said. I would, too, and little he'd like it : but I could see my way no plainer, for all my thinking. One can get blinded, that way, just with thinking.

I'd longer than I meant to wait at the cross-roads under Lohar Pass ; all in my hurry I got there by nine, and he not due at the earliest till ten. It was a wet night too, not raining, but a sort of mist about, closing you in, and the trees above the road dripping till the road shone black like deep water. There was a wee glint of moon, now and again when the mist lifted. You could not hear sounds any distance, by reason of the thick damp air. It was more than half nine before I heard anything but my own thoughts, and they beating like a silly drum ; and then all it was was a goat, lost, and calling for supper. I'd none, and it

went on after nozzling my hand in a tired way. They were long minutes after that, and I had to make them go by not looking either way at the roads, or trying to guess the time; only praying, time and again, Rake would not come, this or any other night.

But I might have known he'd come; sooner than I thought, quite sudden, out of the damp mist, his engine making no more fuss than a spinning wheel, and me jumping at it as if I'd not been waiting for him at all.

He stopped as soon as he saw me. For the minute I could not speak. I've never acted so ill in my life. I stood and gaped at him, hardly dropping my arms, that I'd waved to stop him. The mist was wet, in drops, on the shoulders of his coat—the straps stood out on his squareness like a uniform. It was wet on his hair too, for he wore no cap: his head was tilted forward, as ever, and his eyes looked up at me, just watching: no questions asked. Out of the mist he came, and I stood gaping.

'Well, Mary,' he said at last, and his eyes laughed. Even his cheek-bones were glistening with the wet. 'Well, Mary?' he said, looking at me.

'Oh, Rake!' I said, as if I'd been his equal, and him knowing me all my life. I'd remembered my tale. 'Oh, Rake, is it yourself?'

'Who'd it be, Mary?'

'Sure, it's you I was told to look for,' I said, refusing to think why.

'M-h'm?' says he, slow and easy.

'I was to look for you,' I said. 'I—I've kept a still tongue, Rake. But there's a man here—hurt, he is, and wanting you. He told me——'

'What'll his name be?' Rake leaned forward a little, staring into my eyes. I found I could face him, by not thinking.

'Mulcahy his name is, he said,' I answered, doubtful. They'd told me that to say.

'M-h'm?' said Rake.

'He's hurt,' and I went on in a rush, 'I found him—in the road; and he could walk then, and I got him in: but now he can't.'

'M-h'm?' said Rake, still watching.

'He told me to wait for you,' I said. 'He said you'd be coming this way—and I didn't ask why——'

'No, ye kept a still tongue, Mary,' said Rake. I did waver at that, but I hoped he missed it.

'He could only say that, and where I was to wait on you to call you to him,' I said. 'I'd to leave him fainting——' I seemed only able to get it out in bits.

'M-h'm,' said Rake. 'Well, take me to him, Mary. Where is it ye've put him?'

His eyes never left my face. I supposed it was my conscience, but his voice sounded queer to me, and I kept praying my face was natural. I could not think how it ought to look.

'How far is it to this place, Mary?'

'It's a matter of yards,' I said. 'A wee bit hut it is—my Jim uses it, and I was waiting for him, only he'd to go out again to-night.'

'Had he?' said Rake. 'What's your Jim do now?'

'What he always did—driving for Boyds,' I said. I didn't want to talk more, least of all about Jim.

'Och well,' said Rake, 'if that's all it is, I'll walk,' and he set the bicycle in the hedge, so no one would notice, and blew out the tail light, which was oil. I didn't like his leaving it, like that; it looked as if he knew; and yet I hoped he did. The way he watched me, even as we walked, frightened me; or else it was my own thoughts. I was praying, too, that I'd do it right, if it was right, and then be able to forget. But he walked beside me, and because I'd have been glad, now, to talk, he said nothing. Only his eyes I felt on me, look or not—and more often I dared not.

'It'll be there,' I said, pointing when we got round the corner and could see the lighted window of the hut. 'I left the light burning. Maybe he'll be well enough to sit behind you.'

'Maybe,' said Rake, slow, 'if he wants to.'

I knew he'd to be wary, even if he guessed nothing, but his tone worried me. I seemed to see Jim facing us when the door should be opened, and I couldn't have borne him shot so; and yet I wanted Rake to know. I went on, moving to the hut, my mind getting more stupid every step I took, when suddenly he spoke again.

'No, Mary,' he said, very gentle, a tone I never knew him use. 'No. Not that way. I think we'll try the side door.'

I'd have whipped round on him, if I hadn't turned cold and still at the words. He was just behind me as he spoke, and I could feel his hand as it were in his hip pocket. 'The side door,

Mary, since you've the key,' he said ; ' and—a still tongue, Mary Connellan.'

If he thought I was for screaming, he mistook me. But I couldn't see why he wanted to come, seeing he'd guessed—or knew all along. Just foolery, I think—he'd that sort of way with him, to take all the odds and best them : though he did it quietly. I found I was moving as he said, round to the side door. How'd he know of it ? Then his voice came again.

' And quiet on your feet, Mary,' he said. I was praying Jim was the other end of the room, or even not there, when we came to the door.

' Aye, here we are,' he said. ' Now, Mary, you first.'

I went in, leaving the door wide, and he on my heels. I don't know what my face showed, but I felt like a sleep-walker, and yet my greatest thought was shame—shame every way, and most that he'd guessed. I went through them all—and they waiting, standing, but half-ready, and no order to them because we came by the wrong door. I'd my hands out, as if to feel my way. They parted and let me through.

I heard him shut the door : and then there was a queer silence. When I dared turn, trying to hide and yet watch, I was so ashamed, I saw they were all standing just as when I came in. I saw Jim at the wall, nearest the main door. They were mostly in shadow, and even behind them you could feel they were watching, watching : but they didn't move ; and after that it was him I looked at.

Rake Gillespie stood with his back to the door he'd shut. His hand was on his hip, and a small barrel gleamed out of his hand ; but somehow, as I looked, I didn't think it was that that had frightened them. They hadn't raised their hands, they hadn't moved. It was his eyes had stilled them, as they had me. He stood there in the light of the turfs, square and short, his head tilted forward, looking round, slowly, with his eyes quiet—searching. He didn't move his head ; only his eyes moved, watching, as if even a shadow couldn't change but he'd know it. There wasn't a breath among the men. Mice couldn't have been stiller. His eyes studied them, and presently he moved his pistol, slowly, pointing in turn round the semicircle. When he'd finished that there came a little change on his face ; I wasn't sure he moved, but the light gleamed on his cheek-bones, and he spoke.

' Ye can stand up, Mary,' he said. ' I am not shootin' at girls.'

I had no answer for him, but I stood up, looking at nothing.

‘And ye can come out from there,’ he went on. ‘Come over to me. Only don’t cover my gun.’

I moved out from them, and round so he still covered them, and stood by the door too. I was shaking, but it was not fear. It was a sort of cold, like cramp over the heart, that I felt. Not one of the men moved.

‘Now,’ he said to them, ‘listen, will yu? I haven’t time to shoot the lot of ye, and you’re hardly worth it. I haven’t time, ever, to spend on men who make women do their dirty work. Mary here is a good actress. I would have guessed nothing. I happened to have information. But yu’d better not try it again.’ He paused a minute. ‘You don’t catch the Rider just yet.’ He put his left hand behind him and unfastened the door, and moved a step forward—but his eyes kept them still.

‘Mary,’ he said, ‘go out now, leaving the door open, and get my machine out of the ditch. Then wait for me.’

He fired suddenly, digging a great hole in the mud floor just before Croskery’s feet, and spattering them all with the clay. I had waited a minute, and I saw Croskery’s face through the smoke, white like paper, his eyes staring. Jim I could not see. Rake Gillespie spoke again.

‘Mind,’ he said, ‘I’ll not wait another time. But I wanted to see the manner of fools ye were, setting a woman on the job. Now I’ve seen.’ He laughed, short. ‘By God!’ he said, and backed out, laughing, ‘by God, but ye needed a woman!’ And he was in the road backing still, and me running behind to the bike. ‘Ye needn’t hurry, Mary,’ says he; ‘take it easy.’ But I couldn’t. I thought they’d be out in a minute and there’d be more shooting, and I’d had enough. I was still fumbling at the handle-bars when he came up. There was no sound from the hut. ‘No, and there won’t be,’ he says, seeing my face. ‘They’ll get back quietly to their holes, never you fear, Mary. Here, give it me.’

I let him move it, stuck as it was with briars and mud. He got it out to the middle of the road, and stood looking down at it a minute. I thought he was going to mount, and I wanted him gone quickly: and yet I couldn’t bear to stand and watch him go. My feet stayed still, though. He turned on me suddenly, and I saw again that wary look, with the laughter behind it now.

‘Thought you’d killed me that time, didn’t you, Mary?’ said he. He took my hand and played with it as we stood, and I listen-

ing in a panic for shots, and watching his mouth twist with laughter in the dimness. It was dark, as a girl's is, under the half-light. 'No, Mary,' he said, 'I'm not dead yet.'

'Oh, who told you?' I cried at him, between anger and shame. 'Who told you, that I failed?'

He looked at me a minute.

'Why, your face, Mary,' he said.

'Then—you didn't know—it was—you've saved me too,' I stammered.

'Well, what would Jim think?' he asked.

I'd no words. He still played with my hand. I think I was angriest just then, but I hardly knew what at. It should have been because I'd failed, and he'd guessed—or because he took so much for granted: but it wasn't.

'Oh, you can keep a still tongue, Mary,' he told me then.

'I didn't—it was they told me it was you,' I cried. 'Indeed, I never knew——'

'No,' said he with a laugh. 'It's safer not.'

'Oh, believe me, believe me I didn't!' I said then, crying. 'I would not have. Only this—this was different.'

'Yes—different, Mary. Oh, Jim will forgive you. And I will too—for one thing.' He watched me still a minute, and then suddenly he had me clutched against him, and was kissing my mouth, so hard I barely thought it was kissing; even then I knew I was nothing to him, or would be, a minute after; but I could have drowned so and been happy.

As suddenly as he'd done it he let go: he was on his machine, and the engine running, with never a word. His eyes had left me, too, but for a glance as he went; and I saw the laughing sideways twist his mouth had. He called out, going:

'And now ye can tell Jim how it was, eh, Mary?'

Well, I did. All but one thing: and Jim could never see why I cried.

## THE CHARM OF AN OLD ENGLISH COTTAGE.

BY MABEL DAWSON.

'This modern age is not yet so sick with hurry as to be insensitive to the charm and glory of the Ancient English Cottage.'—*Morning Post*, January 9, 1936.

CAN you close your eyes for a moment and visualise some fair face you may have known in your youth? A face that was serene and beautiful, and then imagine that same countenance—bloated, scarred and covered with excrescences? You think of such a transformation with a shudder. Yet this is the face of the English country-side—what it once was and what it has now become. Its beauty marred and seamed by arterial roads and bloated by petrol stations, hideous advertisements and glaring jerry-built houses. Lovely old parks—where once the deer browsed 'neath spreading oaks—now cut up into building sites—the trees lopped or felled and the old Manors and Halls that once stood in these parks either altered past recognition, turned into flats, hotels or institutions, or demolished entirely. Beauty has to give place to utility in this commercial age, and we seem powerless to prevent it.

But, scattered over the country-side, there still remain many ancient and picturesque cottages. These have mostly been inhabited by farm labourers and their families, but as Council houses are now everywhere being erected, the tenants of these cottages remove there (as being more commodious and convenient) and the landlord of the vacant cottages then finds it is not worth while to incur the expenses of doing them up according to the requirements of the County Councils—who insist on their being made 'habitable' before a new tenant takes possession.

So motoring along, you will see many a little Tudor or Jacobean cottage standing empty and appearing more deserted and derelict each time you pass it, gazing through its lacklustre casements at the hurrying traffic, which all day long rushes heedlessly past.

Think of the scenes these windows may once have witnessed in days gone by. Perhaps the Beacons blazing at the time of the Armada—jaunty Cavaliers in plumed hats—a party of Cromwell's Ironsides jogging soberly along—'a gentleman of the road'



galloping past with spurs to his horse's flanks—the coaches with their merry horns and steaming horses—smugglers, their ponies' hoofs muffled as they creep along in the moonlight carrying their illicit goods—all these sights and many more.

And now, what is to be the ultimate fate of these old houses? Will they be disfigured and partially hidden by a petrol station? Or demolished and a modern villa built on the site? Or—will some artistic soul take pity on their plight and buy them, and with love and care give them a longer lease of life? And by so doing also add immeasurably to their own joy and interest.

For many years I had longed to possess some such old cottage for week-ends and holidays, and when at last it became possible for me to do so, I began my search for one. Of course, one's ideas were very high to start with. I wished for something like Beverly Nichols's *Thatched Cottage* or 'Cecil Roberts's' *Pilgrim Cottage*, but I soon realised that the almost perfect cottage will always demand and get a good price, and as in my case the price was to be well under £400, I had to come down to essentials. For me the essentials were—there must be at least six rooms—the cottage must face south—have pleasant views not overlooked—a garden of a quarter-acre—good and plentiful water supply—be within a few miles of the sea and easy motoring distance from Surrey—to be not less than 250 years old and the structural parts of the building in good condition so that I need not spend money on outside repairs—and before long I heard of a place that seemed likely to fulfil most of these requirements. So my husband and I set out on a wet October afternoon to inspect it.

It lay down a country lane off the Bognor-Chichester road and stood in about a quarter of an acre of ground (one could not then call it 'garden,' as it was simply a mass of nettles and thistles). The little house could best be described in the words of a sixteenth-century writer, 'A plain little house with pretty Backsides.' That is—the front was square, with four windows, and had been refaced with brick and colourwashed cream, but the east gables and the back were of the original flint and rock, while behind was the very deep old tiled roof sloping down to within about five feet of the ground.

On entering the cottage through a small passage we came first into a little sitting-room on the left, which had an oak beam across the ceiling, a modern fireplace and two windows—one facing south over the lane and meadows, the other on to an ancient apple tree and the garden. Crossing the passage again, we came into a larger

room with well-laid flag-stone floor, oak beam on ceiling and what had been a large open fireplace, but was now partly filled in with bricks and a cooking range installed, and in a cupboard on the left the ingle-nook was still to be seen. There were also three other deep cupboards in the walls, which I knew I should find useful. From this room we descended by a stone step into a long narrow passage, also flag-stoned, and with a raftered ceiling. On the right this led to the old bakehouse or scullery containing a large brick bread-oven, open fireplace, copper and pump, and across the ceiling almost an entire tree, which was whitewashed. From this room, which had two windows, we obtained a really lovely and extensive view over Goodwood and the Downs, and here a door led into the back garden. To the left of the passage was the cellar with brick floor and again oak-raftered ceiling, and a small window. Near the cellar a short stairway led to a small bedroom with some fine timber in the walls, and facing west on to the boughs of the old apple tree.

There were two more bedrooms to see, these lay up a staircase opposite the front door, and both faced south, one with a quaint little fireplace with hobs on each side, and the larger one had no fireplace, but the huge brick kitchen chimney came up through the walls. Also there was a niche cut out of the east wall, and suggesting a little shrine where perhaps stood a statue of Our Lady some time or other. We thought the whole cottage very quaint and liked it immensely, and though it had been empty for two years, it appeared to be absolutely dry and with no sign or smell of damp. And I liked the atmosphere too. One can always tell on entering a house whether one could be happy there, and also what sort of folk have inhabited it in the past. The owner told me that his grandfather 'used to do a bit o' smuggling,' and I have omitted to mention that in the larger bedroom was a cupboard which led into a long narrow room or passage under the roof and came out at the back of the house above the cellar and just outside the tiny bedroom there. This I understand in Sussex is called the 'Skilling room' and would have been a good spot for a smuggler to hide his goods in; also—in the case of Excise Men or the Press Gang searching the house—a likely means of escape.

Well—to make a long story short—I bought the cottage and the deeds were duly handed over. These dated back to 1732, but I think the house is considerably older, as it was originally part of the Manor of Aldwick, and the deeds were probably not drawn up till the Manor was sold and the cottage became freehold.

Naturally, as it was getting late in the year, one's first task was to get the garden cleared and planted. The spade work was done quickly and efficiently by a local man, who also laid down a small lawn, and I then planted as many perennials as the beds would hold, just leaving space to sow annuals in the spring, and the following summer the garden was a riot of colour. Getting so much sun there, everything seems to grow in the most marvellous manner. What fun it is digging in an old garden! You never know what relics of the past your spade may turn up. Our finds up to date are: a Queen Anne farthing; George I halfpenny; George II penny; a mediæval key; an old pewter button; an Austrian silver coin 1870; and bits of old dinner-services, clay pipes and other bric-à-brac, all giving an impetus to the imagination. One coin especially intrigued me—it was bent and green with age and badly corroded with rust ('Something quite B.C.,' thought I). All approved methods failing to clean it, I rubbed it gently with sandpaper, when slowly but surely there came to light the revered but familiar features of our late Sovereign Lord King George V (a halfpenny). Still—'It never yet did hurt to lay down likelihoods and farms of hope.'

After doing the necessary garden work I began on the inside of the cottage. The cooking-range and bricks were removed from the front kitchen fireplace and that room was distempered a pale yellow, and the small sitting-room papered with an orange shade which throws up well all the oak and old prints, and gives a sunny effect. Both bedrooms had cheery and old-fashioned cottage papers put there. I think one should keep as much as possible to the style of a house and not try and furnish an old cottage like a Baronial Hall, or worse still, degrade it with fumed oak or chromium-plated furniture and 'arty' cushions and carpets. I had ordered five single bedsteads and all the necessary kitchen utensils, and then set out to search for small pieces of antique furniture, etc. I had already in my possession a Cromwellian gate-legged table and six spindle-back chairs, so made a start with these and two comfortable armchairs. I also owned a Hepplewhite corner washstand, a small Chippendale table and a larger one of about the same period. These I put into my own bedroom—the larger table became my dressing-table and the smaller one stood near the bed, and I soon picked up an old jug and basin for the corner washstand, and also, later, a small antique chest of drawers for my clothes.

And here let me advise anyone who is furnishing an old cottage

or house—not to be in a hurry about it. Even if you can afford to do so—it is a mistake to go straight away to a large antique shop and order a lot of stuff there. For if you do so you will deprive yourself of all the rapture of pursuing, and also pay nearly twice as much as you need. It adds such a zest to the whole thing to pass many an hour gazing into the windows of the antique shops you will see when motoring anywhere, or in the different towns you may visit while staying with friends. And by taking your time you may pick up some good bargains. In Epsom Market I bought for 2s. 6*d.* a pair of old andirons, just what I needed for the kitchen fireplace. Another time, having to wait half an hour for a train at Peckham Rye, I wandered round a ‘junk’ shop there. Such a medley of articles, mostly heavy Victorian, but I came across a Jacobean spice cupboard of unusual dimensions, and most richly carved with figures, etc., and containing six small drawers, the handles of which were raised and carved with men’s heads. I bought it for 25*s.*, and an expert has since valued it at £15. At the same shop I also secured six Nankin plates for 9*s.* and a black-and-white water-colour of Isaac Newton, almost contemporary, I should say, judging from the frame. At another ‘second-hand’ shop (one could hardly designate it ‘antique’) I saw a Georgian mahogany and gesso frame which appeared to have once held a mirror, but now surrounded a large and faded photograph of Mr. Gladstone. On enquiring the price, I was told two shillings and sixpence for the frame alone, but another shilling if I took Mr. Gladstone. As I did not want Mr. Gladstone at any price, I left him behind and carried off the frame, which is now restored to its original intention and is very effective as a mirror.

For some time I have had my eye on an old blunderbuss which I feel would look ‘simply marvellous’ hanging along the oak beam in the front kitchen, but at present the price is more than I think I should pay for a mere bauble, but I live in hopes of acquiring it one day. The owner, on first displaying it and to show how it was fired, pointed it in my direction, but hastily moving out of his range I said haughtily, ‘Kindly aim at your own ceiling and not at *me*,’ for one does hear such strange tales of these old weapons going off suddenly and killing the wrong person—never the *right* one unfortunately! However, I will not enumerate all my bargains, but by saving money on these less important items I had more to spare for more valuable things—and among these an old Sussex fireback.

Anyhow, with all due modesty I can say that the cottage now does look charming, and I find that even people who were not formerly interested in such things do become so after seeing round the place, and the remark, 'Do try and find me a cottage like this,' is more often than not said on departure. There was one exception—a lady who on being shown the cottage and all my treasures passed everything in stony silence, but went into raptures over a modern check green and white teacloth hanging on the line. The same person suggested I should sell part of the kitchen garden 'to a builder' who could 'erect there two small cottages' and give me 'perhaps quite a fair price for the land.' I might have said, 'The place whereon thou standest is holy ground,' but she would never have understood. To her Life will always be just the 'primrose by the river's brim' and nothing more. And talking of primroses, how lovely they are in April on the banks and in the hedges all round my cottage, but then every season is charming to those who really love the country. In spring I see from my windows these primroses, and as I lie in bed, the lambs gambolling in the meadow opposite. In summer the same banks and hedges hold huge clusters of meadow-sweet which perfume the whole place, also comfrey, ragwort and scabious. The garden is gay with flowers and the hay lies cut in the meadows with its spicy scent. In autumn there are the golden cornfields, and mushrooms and blackberries to be gathered in plenty. In winter I dig myself in—that is, I spend a good deal of my time doing things indoors. And there are always pleasant walks to take with my spaniel, and many new places to explore, and often the treat of wondrous sunsets and splendid moonlight to enjoy. A poet says 'All houses where men lived and died are haunted houses,' and most old houses are supposed to have their ghost, which, with a large party there, may be quite an acquisition. But as I am often alone for the evenings, I feel a ghost would be rather a doubtful blessing. And there is nothing eerie about this cottage. And no unnatural phenomenon, unless it is that though we have no bells either outside or inside, I have occasionally fancied I heard one ringing in the night. I suggested to a friend that possibly the scoundrel who cut the bell from the Inchcape Rock might have carried it here, and hidden it beneath the floor or foundations, but he replied that he did not think it at all likely—some people have no imagination! But I fear no foe to-night as I sit by my blazing hearth.

The Aladdin lamp casts a soft glow through its parchment shade

on the old prints and mellow oak furniture, and illuminates the Staffordshire figures on the mantelpiece. I give a friendly nod to these little men and women—Rebecca-at-the-Well with her crinoline and neat ‘middle jimp’ still firmly grasps her pitcher. General Macready stands stiffly in military fashion. The sportsman in green breeches and pink jacket leans heavily on his fowling piece and holds his wooden-looking hare. Bonnie Prince Charlie’s sporran takes on a still more unnatural hue, and Moses—but at Moses I gaze anxiously, for when he came to me he was minus an arm (from holding it aloft so long, I expect), so I made him another from plasticine, and I fear that one day the heat of the fire will cause him to lose that arm again, but so far, good! Moses’ arm is still erect. My spaniel is chasing her own shadow in the garden, and soon the big white owl will come out and flit like some pale wraith round the moonlit meadow. How cosy the room looks and how very, very peaceful it all is. To-morrow I must return to Surrey, but before I seek my pillow to-night there are some toasts to be drunk. I recollect that in the cellar—where doubtless once stood huge barrels of home-brewed ale and perhaps also a keg of contraband brandy—there now is one half-bottle of cider! This I will fetch for my toasts.

‘Come, gentle friend—drink with a merry heart,  
But ere thou drink too much—depart,  
For though good wine will make the spirit stout,  
Yet when too much goes in the wit goes out.’

These words, contemporary with Shakespeare, were on the cellar door in my grandfather’s old Tudor Hall in Buckinghamshire and seem appropriate to the occasion as I return with my cider to the fireside. Alas! having no pewter tankard I reach out for a Woolworth wineglass (‘This fragile glass of crystal tall it has lasted longer than is right’). First—The King, God Bless Him. Now—the old, old toast, To Surrey, Home and Duty. (‘Ah! that draught was very cool.’) Poor old Longfellow seems rather apt to-night. Nobody reads him now, but I learnt whole reams of his poetry when a child.

But the night grows apace and my cider grows flat. There is still half the half-bottle remaining. So—no heel-taps, gentlemen! Here’s to the Smugglers’ Cottage. Long may it stand and flourish. And when ‘next I do ride abroad may I be there to see.’

‘THE CORNHILL’: OLD AND NEW.

*IN January, with the beginning of a new year and a new volume (the 155th), the old CORNHILL will appear in a new dress. During the course of its long and distinguished life it has shown more than once that it has within it the vitality of growth: it has changed with the changing times, and yet throughout it has remained in all essentials the same; its character was given it in the reign of its first Editor, Thackeray, and it has maintained it ever since. No author, however famous, can count as of right upon inclusion; no author, however humble, need despair of admission—the one test is excellence of contribution.*

*And yet change is an integral part of life: new types are invented, new processes are born, new ideas emerge—and everyone enjoys new clothes, woman always, and even man, more often than he confesses, for all his pretended scorn of fashion. It is, for example, not many years back that THE TIMES felt the need of change: it had altered, consciously and unconsciously, often in the course of its history; recently it presented itself to its readers in new type and form. Similarly now the CORNHILL will, in January, be renewed and yet the same. It will be in no way changed in character; it will, as throughout its life, endeavour to give to its readers the best, and nothing but the best, of modern literature, in articles, stories, and poems: but it will give these in a new typographical form. The only criticism that is from time to time heard of the CORNHILL is that its pages not only look old-fashioned but are in fact not as easy for the eyes to read as they could now be made, and that criticism will accordingly be met. A new type has been chosen specially for its clarity and its attraction: the size of the pages will remain the same, but the spacing will be less close and fewer words printed on each page—on the other hand, more pages will be given to each number, by way of compensation. On the cover the well-known vignettes of the seasons will still appear, but in a fresh setting. It is hoped that in every way the changes will emphasise to all that wide public which still cares for the standard that has for so long been borne aloft in these pages that the CORNHILL is still representative of the very best in modern literature.*

G.

## *A POSSESSION FOR EVER.*

BY E. LLOYD BARRITT.

It was a cold morning early in winter and a north-east wind blowing from the Thracian mountains whipped up the channel running between Thasos and the mainland. The Athenian commander had his headquarters on the island and was busy writing beside a huge log fire. One side of him was scorched, while down the other ran a cold draught like a waterfall. Thucydides, however, was conscious of neither heat nor cold. He was completely absorbed in making notes for his next speech.

It was the eighth year of the Peloponnesian War—the death-struggle between Athens and Sparta. Thucydides had been sent to patrol the northern Ægean, to hold the Athenian allies to their allegiance, by persuasion if possible, if not, by intimidation or even force. It was no easy task, with Spartan envoys everywhere crudely insisting that the allies of Athens had now become her subjects, and holding out the magic bribe of ‘freedom’ to induce them to revolt.

Together with the duties of admiral and general, Thucydides had to combine those of ambassador and orator. To aid him in his arguments, he had drawn up a double list of the national characteristics of both sides: Sparta, stupid, short-sighted, unenterprising; dauntless in the field, of course—no use denying patent fact—but prone to lose the fruits of her valour by over-caution. Athens, eager, alert, open-minded, sanguine, resourceful, fickle—? Thucydides crossed out ‘fickle’ and substituted ‘addicted to innovations.’ It was a masterly piece of analysis and Thucydides felt justly proud of it.

At this point he was interrupted by the arrival of a messenger from the mainland with the request that he should go at once to the relief of Amphipolis.

‘Amphipolis! Why, what on earth——?’ But his protestations were cut short by the urgency of the situation. Amphipolis was an Athenian colony, founded some twelve years previously under the auspices of Pericles himself. It was the key which unlocked for Athens the treasures of Thrace and Macedon—the



timber which built her ships and the gold which paid her crews. If anything were to happen to this jewel of the Empire——

His anxieties raced along subterranean channels. Outwardly Thucydides was calm, alert, cheerful. His time had not been spent entirely in the study of international psychology. So excellent were his dispositions and so secure his discipline, that within an hour of the messenger's arrival he had locked away his manuscripts, sacrificed to the gods, and was ready to set sail with the seven galleys he had kept at Thasos in preparation for some such unexpected call as this. The sky was leaden with unfallen snow and the seas were running high, lashed with an icy wind. The passage was going to be a severe test of seamanship. Thucydides was glad he had allowed no slackness to impair the fitness of his crews.

The first snow-flakes came whirling down on his scarlet cloak as he stepped aboard his flagship followed by the messenger. During the voyage he learnt further particulars. The Spartan general Brasidas, showing unlooked-for enterprise, had arrived suddenly before Amphipolis, and was now carrying on negotiations with the traitors. The 'traitors,' of course, were the pro-Spartan element in Amphipolis.

'But Eucles,' said Thucydides. 'What is Eucles doing meanwhile?'

Eucles was the Athenian commander of Amphipolis and his one idea had been to send to his colleague for aid. Thucydides felt that his estimate of Athenian and Spartan characteristics was bewilderingly at fault.

Before nightfall they reached the coast of Macedon and rounded the bend into the Strymon estuary. Three miles to northward, Amphipolis showed up wan and ghostly against a pall of black clouds.

Thucydides praised his crews for their skill in accomplishing so difficult a passage in record time, but his satisfaction was marred by anxiety about the fate of the city and the fecklessness of Eucles. When they docked at Eion, the commercial seaport at the river's mouth, it was Eucles who met him first on the snow-powdered landing-stage—Eucles with a white face and the news that Brasidas and his Spartans had entered the city that very morning.

'What!' said Thucydides. 'Without a blow struck?'

'What could I do? The place was rotten with treachery.'

'Couldn't you have made speeches to the citizens and persuaded

them that the friendship of Athens was worth more than Sparta's ?'

'Speeches indeed ! It's Brasidas who's been doing that. He said he had come to free them from the tyranny of Athens and from the enforced payment of tribute. Appeal to their pockets and the trick is done. Then he offered such favourable terms that the citizens jumped at them. He even let the Athenians depart scot-free—that's why I'm here. I tell you, Brasidas is no bad speaker—for a Spartan, of course.'

'Of course—for a Spartan,' Thucydides agreed, and remained thoughtful. He was sorry for Eucles, who would be called over the coals for this. The war party at Athens, led by Cleon, would be enraged at this loss of prestige. Besides the timber trade, so indispensable to the naval power of Athens, there were the Thracian gold-mines. Thucydides knew all about that, for he held property in the district.

For the present, however, there was nothing to be done except fortify Eion in readiness for the attack Brasidas was bound to make upon it.

Thucydides set about the work with his usual thoroughness. The attack, launched a few days later, was beaten off without much difficulty. The Spartans were still denied access to the sea.

After the fighting, Brasidas asked for the usual truce to collect the dead. He also requested a personal interview with the Athenian commander, saying he wished to discuss details about an escort home for certain prisoners. Thucydides had a feeling that this was a pretext rather than a reason, but decided to accord the interview none the less.

The two generals met in a temple outside Amphipolis. Brasidas talked about the homeward route. He laid stress on the friendships he had formed in Thessaly. They gave him, he said, a right of way overland, down to Athens, Sparta and the south. He seemed to imply that his line of communication by land was far stronger than that of Thucydides by sea.

'For example,' he said, 'some runners arrived here in Amphipolis yesterday, having left Sparta only eight days earlier. And of course,' he added, laughing, 'they pick up all the news from Athens on the way. So perhaps I know more about the affairs of your country than you do yourself. That is,' he corrected himself politely, 'unless you have received despatches recently ?'

'None since I left Thasos,' said Thucydides uneasily. He felt

that with a man like Cleon in the saddle at home almost anything might happen. He wished he could see what Brasidas was driving at. It was a reversal of the usual process for an Athenian to be bamboozled about like this by a Spartan.

As far as Thucydides knew the breed, they generally left all the talking to you, while they looked down their noses and pretended to be considering the value of your remarks. Actually of course because they were too slow to follow the argument. But this Brasidas—— Well might Eucles say that he was a negation of everything Spartan. His manners were perfect, his blue eyes danced with mischief, he knew something—that was it, he knew something! And he was trying to get Thucydides to commit himself, but to what?

‘Your friend Cleon still holds the reins,’ the Spartan went on, uttering platitudes with the air of a man imparting useful information. ‘He seems to be more firmly in the saddle than ever and he is certainly making the pace. An extraordinary state, that of yours, where the son of a tanner can control the lives and destinies of men of such calibre as yourself! Has he ever forgiven you for the way you used to snub him in the Assembly? Don’t you ever fear that he may plot to tan you with strips of his own leather?’

‘You seem very well informed,’ Thucydides began, but Brasidas interrupted him.

‘I am very well informed, both about our affairs and yours. I conceive it to be my duty. For example, I know that you have a controlling interest in the gold-mines up yonder, and that you are a land-owner respected and beloved in these parts. Now I, on the other hand, am an interloper, a foreign invader, trying to snatch a precarious foothold. Yet I dare to hope that some day my friendship might prove of value to you, as yours would undoubtedly be to me. The gods be my witness, Thucydides, that Fate and not my own heart bids me look upon you as an enemy.’

This un-Spartanlike effusion terminated the interview.

‘So that’s it,’ thought Thucydides. ‘He is actually trying to win me over on account of my wealth and influence. I suppose he will return to the attack later. I shall be getting another visit soon.’

He did get another visit, but not from Brasidas. His visitors were accredited messengers of the government of Athens who,

travelling by sea, had been delayed by storms. The despatches they carried read as follows:

'The sovereign people of Athens, learning of the failure of their general Thucydides to save Amphipolis from falling into the hands of the enemy, declare him guilty of high treason and banish him the realm on pain of death. His house and property in Athens are forfeit to the State, and his family and dependents shall remove themselves hence within the space of twenty days.'

This time it was Thucydides who sought out Brasidas. The Spartan came towards him with outstretched hands.

'I can't pretend to be sorry, since it brings you to me,' he said.

'So you knew all along?'

'My runners came overland, you see. . . . This is the tanner's doing, without a doubt!'

'I wish I could be sure of that. I'd make him smart for it!'

'You can be sure. I can supply the evidence, if there is need. Athens swarms with spies and informers and we Spartans understand the secret service game. Cleon is at the back of this, that can be proved up to the hilt. But what then?'

'I shall expose him! I shall bring him to book, and if there's any justice in Athens—'

'But is there?' Brasidas was smiling, but his blue eyes held worlds of disillusion. 'Hadn't you better be practical? Think what you are going to do.'

'Ah, yes. That was really why I came. You spoke of a safe-conduct through Thessaly. Luckily I still have the means of paying. They haven't laid hands upon my mining rights.'

'They would have done, be sure, if they'd had the chance. But since we have taken Amphipolis, my men have overrun the country. Your concessions are now in Spartan territory! But don't be alarmed. As long as they remain so, your income at least is secure.'

He whistled a little tune as though carelessly in order to give his guest time to regain his self-possession.

'I have no words to thank you,' said Thucydides at last. 'Exiled by my countrymen and only not a beggar through the kindness of an enemy!'

Brasidas shrugged his shoulders. His twinkling blue eyes always seemed to hold some joke obvious only to himself.

'Spartans,' he observed in apologetic accents. 'You know the

reputation we have—always anxious to keep in with moneyed people like yourself, for instance !’

‘I had better make clear my position,’ said Thucydides. ‘I should not of course entertain for a moment the idea of taking up arms against my own country. I shall press for reinstatement, but in a constitutional manner. I intend to find some refuge as near as possible to the Athenian borders and get into communication with my friends.’

‘I understand your state of mind,’ said Brasidas. ‘You are all agog to get back home, or as near home as you dare, and probe the matter. May I suggest an alternative ? You have little chance of gaining men’s ears in Athens just now while Cleon rides the whirlwind. Remain here in Macedon and prepare your case against him. When it is forged to the last link, then make your attack. By then perhaps the populace will have grown tired of their idol.’

‘The advice is good, I know, though little to my liking and given by an enemy.’ Here both men smiled. ‘But remain here in Macedon—where ? how ?’

‘Haven’t you a farm not far from your gold-mines ? Better a hut of one’s own than the palace of a stranger.’

‘Spoken like a Spartan. There is something in what you say, but I don’t know how the family will take it.’

‘It will benefit your sons. Let them exchange the gossip of the agora for the manly pursuits——’

‘I have no sons,’ said Thucydides, turning away. ‘One daughter only. My wife is delicate.’

‘Ah,’ said the Spartan, and relapsed into silence. A delicate wife and a family consisting of one daughter—all that in his opinion spelt the decadence whose other name was Athens.

‘I don’t quite see’—Thucydides was speaking harshly now—‘where you stand to gain in all this. I take it your advice is not entirely disinterested ?’

‘By no means,’ said Brasidas with disarming frankness. ‘Candour for candour. We have conquered this region, but we have yet to gain the goodwill of its inhabitants. That goodwill is largely at your disposal. I do not seek for your co-operation in arms. Even if you were willing to contemplate such a course, it would only cause a flutter among my own bright lads and trouble for me, their commander. But a well-placed, benevolent neutral—my dear Thucydides, there are a hundred little ways in which

you could be of use. I know the esteem in which you are held in these parts, not based entirely upon gold, I assure you! As for your—your family, they can be brought to you as easily as you to them. Their safe-conduct you may leave in my hands.'

Thus it came about that early one winter morning a very harassed steward was escorting his master's household through the streets of Athens before the town was astir. Part of their route skirted the agora. Xanthias felt nervous about this, but only market people seemed to be abroad. He walked between two litters, one bearing Chryses, his master's wife, and the other, Pamphile, their only child. The bearers of the former litter were hurrying on ahead, obeying his instructions to get into a quiet street as soon as possible, when Pamphile, who had been peeping through her curtains, called to her bearers to set her down. They were glad enough to obey her and stand blowing a little warmth into their numbed fingers, till Xanthias turned back and threatened them with the stick. But Pamphile flew at him and held his arm, begging to be allowed to walk through the agora just this once, if she held her veil round her face. Poor Xanthias, whose only thought was to get on quickly and avoid a commotion, seized the naughty child by one arm and dragged her along the sidewalk. It was but a hundred yards to the street turning, when round the corner came the last person they could have hoped to meet—Cleon, returning home from an all-night party, very drunk, attended by his steward and two slaves bearing torches guttering in their sockets.

There was no time to get out of his way. The two parties met face to face. Pamphile's old nurse had now run up to the rescue of her charge and Cleon stood there swaying and hiccoughing, regarding with drunken gravity the faces of the two women, one old and wizened, the other young and fresh. Pamphile, of course, had forgotten her promise to hold her veil.

It was a moment fraught with danger, but luckily for the child Cleon's steward was a man of good sense, as anxious to avoid trouble as was Xanthias himself. With a jerk of his head to Xanthias he made way for them to pass. They whisked the child out of sight in no time, while Cleon stood complaining about a nymph who turned into a hag and then back again into a nymph and finally vanished away altogether.

'You know, what I like,' he confided tearfully to his man,

‘is a girl who makes up her mind to be a girl and goes through with it.’

Thucydides was occupied for some time in settling his family into their new home. Brasidas was as good as his word and gave them every facility his protection could afford. Then he sailed away to Thrace and added to his already famous exploits another series of brilliant successes. Thucydides found himself one day with absolutely nothing to do. A new and unpleasant experience for him, for life in Athens was always so full of public business that her citizens could justly complain of having no time for their private affairs. It came upon the exile with the force of a blow that this blank day was only the forerunner of a long procession of useless, unfilled hours. The thought of it maddened him. In desperate search for some occupation, he began to work up all the notes he had made upon events leading to his banishment. He arranged them in the form of an indictment of Cleon, and a very formidable array they made. So he worked himself from a mood of blank despair into one of fiery indignation, and only laid down his pen when he looked up with hot eyes and aching head to find the sun near setting. He decided to take a walk round the estate to cool himself before dinner. Near one of the barns he came upon Pamphile, with her skirts gathered up in one hand and a live chicken in the other.

‘What are you doing here?’ he asked angrily, ‘running about among stable-boys and such-like and with no woman attendant?’

Pamphile explained calmly that it was essential for her to visit the farmyard twice a day, because the chicken she held in her hand had a crossed beak and could not feed itself properly, so it had to be allowed to peck corn out of her hollowed palm.

‘She won’t take her food from Thrax,’ she said. ‘She’s frightened of him. She’d die if I didn’t look after her.’

‘A good thing if she did die,’ grumbled Thrax. ‘She’ll never come to no good, she won’t. Might as well wring her neck now and be done with it.’

Thrax was a native of these parts who had enlisted as a Thracian mercenary on the side of Sparta, and been taken captive in one of the early encounters of the war. Thucydides had bought him after his capture, getting him cheap, as the man had lost

an eye and was otherwise damaged. The Thracian now enjoyed greater prosperity and security than he had ever known in his life before. He never recovered from his surprise at his own good fortune, but was continually haunted by the fear that if the gods detected it they would not allow it to continue. So he kept up a constant grumbling in the hope of impressing on the deities that he was not really happy at all. Though his mutilated, ugly face caused him to be feared by the other slaves, when it came to the management of animals he was worth his weight in gold, as Thucydides had cause to know.

To Pamphile the change in her father's fortunes had brought life in exchange for imprisonment. In Athens she was rarely allowed out of doors, and never without her veil and unattended, while the long hours indoors were given up to the most futile occupations in the endless endeavour to kill time. Here, in Macedonia, without going outside the bounds of her father's estate, there was an inexhaustible variety of delightful activities to absorb her mind. She discovered that all the animals had personalities and characters far more clearly defined than those of the few children who had been her associates in Athens. The dogs, for example, were not to be petted and fed with sweetmeats. They were of the fierce breed whose work is hunting or guarding, and they resented any attempt she might make to distract them from their duties. They owed allegiance only to Thrax who cared for them, and were liable to snap at Pamphile even when she came offering them some tempting morsel. Clearly there was no chance of making friends of them. The cats were little better, being independent and aloof creatures. They went about hunting mice and rats and birds and, when they thought the dogs were nowhere about, rabbits and even leverets. When she succeeded in catching them, they were muscular, scrawny bodies and scratched and bit to be released. The horses were much more friendly, and the day was to come when Pamphile would ride them bareback all over the estate. For the present, however, she confined her transgressions to feeding them with honey-cakes whenever Thrax's back was turned.

But with the poultry she established a real understanding. These were not dangerous like the dogs, but gentle, confiding creatures, and like Thrax himself, their whole existence seemed to be shot through with fear lest some calamity should fall upon them from the skies. She learnt to recognise all the meanings and



inflections of their speech. Most of all she loved the low, persuasive gurgle with which they came round the doors of the kitchens asking to be fed. The tone was that of a well-bred person uttering a kindly remonstrance and anxious not to overstate the case. Then there was the joyous and triumphant clucking which announced the arrival of an egg, a sound in which the cock always joined as though to prove his interest in the progress of the community. He interpreted his duties strictly and never failed to sound a warning note on the arrival of a stranger or a straying cat. Pamphile decided that he was much too fussy in this respect, since he refused to take any food in the presence of anyone unknown to him. The hens were far more ready to take a chance on a stranger's having good intentions. But the cockerel's motto was evidently 'I fear the Greeks, the bearers of gifts.'

The year following the loss of Amphipolis was a time of truce between Athens and Sparta, but regarded by either side as a breathing space for the preparation of further efforts. Its expiration found both sides ready for a renewal of the struggle. Thucydides had spent most of this time travelling about in the wake of Brasidas, examining the scenes of his exploits and keeping an accurate and impersonal record of events. He had an idea that he might publish it some day, and in any case a man must find some occupation for his mind. Brasidas was very interested in the project and gave him all the helpful information that he could during their infrequent meetings. Towards the end of the truce the Spartan sent for his friend and asked if he had heard the news.

'Your successor is appointed,' he said. 'Guess who it is!'

'What, not Cleon?' Thucydides turned white.

'Yes, Cleon. Now you see why you were superseded.'

'But this move clinches the evidence against him. I must get to work in Athens.'

'You'd better wait and see how he gets on. It's uphill work, trying to impeach a victorious general.'

'Victorious? Are you afraid of him?'

'Of him, not in the least! But look what his forces amount to. The flower of the Athenian army and nothing spared either in money or equipment. Then look at my own troops, native levies for the most part with a mere sprinkling of Spartans to stiffen them. And the shifts I am put to in order to equip and

feed them—no money for anything and hardly knowing where next month's rations are to come from.'

'Yet your usual cheerfulness does not desert you.'

'Oh, I keep hoping that your precious commander-in-chief will go and make an ass of himself sooner or later. That is my one hope. He may be tempted into doing something rash.'

For some time it seemed as though Cleon's luck would hold. After undoing the work of Brasidas in Thrace, he decided that the time had arrived to make his gesture and retake Amphipolis.

The two armies kept within their lines, each waiting for the other to make the first move. And the day came when Cleon, with time on his side and everything to gain by delay, was stung to action against his better judgment by the remarks of his soldiers about the weakness and incompetence of their commander. Accustomed to rule an empire by the thunders of his oratory, he was now destined to become the prey of a lightly whispered word. Any general of the old school, Thucydides himself, for example, would have kept on his own course and let his men say what they would. But Cleon was at once the high-priest and the victim of democracy.

The army demanded action—if not actual fighting, then action of some sort, since anything was better than continuing to sit still. Cleon marched out of his base near Eion and advanced towards Amphipolis, intending only a reconnaissance in force and never dreaming that Brasidas would rush to the attack with the poor material at his disposal. Not until a passing yokel reported having seen under the gates of the town the feet of men and horses passing and repassing in great numbers did Cleon begin to feel any qualms. It seemed that after all Brasidas was massing his troops in Amphipolis preparatory to making a sally. It had been no part of Cleon's plan to risk a decisive battle at this juncture, for he was expecting substantial reinforcements within the next few days. He liked to be able to arrange his own programme. He had departed from it once in obedience to the murmurs of his troops—a pity, that, but the mistake should be rectified. They must get back at once to their base at Eion.

He gave the order to retire.

His men, infected by the fears of their commander, made off at once in the direction of safety, scarcely troubling to maintain their ranks. It was then that Brasidas called out: 'Look at those

fellows—look at the way their spears and heads are going! They will never stand against us. Throw open the gates!’

He himself led the attack on the Athenian centre, leaving his second-in-command in charge of another column directed against their flank.

Outside the main gate of Amphipolis the road was thronged with messengers, stragglers, peddlers of drinks and foodstuffs, mingled with covered carts and litters bearing in the wounded. Thucydides, mounted on a pure-bred bay, was trying patiently to distinguish fact from fiction in the conflicting accounts of the battle which came pouring in with each new arrival. There seemed little doubt that the Athenians were getting the worst of it, but the news was chequered with the report, alternately affirmed and denied, of the death of the Spartan commander.

Thucydides was torn between conflicting emotions. The victory of his country would mean the triumph of his bitterest enemy, while the greatest blow that could befall Sparta would be the death of Brasidas, his staunchest friend. At last a young Spartan officer approached and laid a hand on his bridle.

‘If you are Thucydides, the son of Olorus,’ he said, ‘will you come with me.’

Thucydides followed his guide into the city to find Brasidas lying in a shaded room overlooking the market-place. He had been brought in mortally wounded. He smiled wanly at Thucydides and handed him a ring.

‘Take this,’ he said. ‘It will bring you many friends in Sparta, which you must one day visit. I think you will write a history of this war and publish it some day and be very fair to either side, and in it I too shall live and be remembered by my countrymen. I was right about Cleon, you see. His vaingloriousness has betrayed him. He turned his exposed flank to me. A piece of childish incompetence that would have disgraced a recruit.’

He was silent for a space, recovering his breath. Then an aide came in saying that a targeteer, one of their allied troops, prayed earnestly to see him. Brasidas would have denied him, but the young man’s own demeanour so patently backed up the request.

‘I wonder what it is now,’ Brasidas murmured, and then the targeteer came in, bearing the helmet and shield of Cleon.

‘He, also,’ said Brasidas. ‘But are you sure he is dead?’

‘Quite sure,’ the man answered. ‘He was one of the first

to run away and I overtook him and stabbed him myself—in *the back*,' he added assuringly, as if one could be much more dead by being stabbed in the back.

'His body is in the charge of my captain,' the man went on, 'but he said I might bring the trophies myself and show them to you.'

'You have a good captain,' Brasidas replied. 'Some of our allied captains would have sought to deprive you of the honour. . . . Reward them both suitably,' he added to his aide, 'but do not admit anyone else.'

Thucydides rose to take his leave, but Brasidas put out a hand to detain him.

'Our common enemy,' he murmured. 'I shall be meeting him soon on the banks of the Styx. What message from Thucydides? Shall I tell him you are preparing an indictment of Cleon or a history of the Peloponnesian War?'

'As to that,' said Thucydides, 'I think you know the answer.'

Thus in one day did death claim from Thucydides the friend who should have been his enemy and the enemy who should have been his friend. Following these events he made his long-promised journey south and met some of his fellow-countrymen on the northern border of Attica. They all agreed that it was high time he was recalled, but seemed too busy and harassed to interest themselves greatly in the matter. They kept repeating vaguely that they would see what they could do, but asserted that he had no conception of how difficult everything had now become in Athens.

With this cold comfort Thucydides went on his way to Sparta, feeling that he might as well make the most of his enforced leisure as an exile. Here he found that the friendship of Brasidas stood him in good stead. He was hospitably entertained and given many facilities for studying Spartan customs at first hand. Some of these were inevitably offensive to his Athenian ideas, but like all visitors to that extraordinary state, he was much struck by the freedom accorded the women and their custom of exercising the young girls in gymnastics. The practice was obviously not without its effect on the general physique of the race.

On a frosty morning he was taken out to watch a group of maidens practising a ritual dance in honour of Artemis. The movements were chaste and vigorous, their bodies seemed instinct

with energy, efficient instruments for arduous tasks, their faces glowed with the delight of healthy exercise. Thucydides knew that five years ago he would have called them bucolic and turned away from the spectacle with a light-hearted sneer. To-day he felt that a door was being opened in his mind, prised open, not without pain and effort. He remembered suddenly that he had a daughter, a weedy-looking wisp of a thing, but with a will of her own from what he recalled of her childish ways. He had always taken it for granted somehow that she would grow up into a querulous, ailing woman like her mother, and that there was nothing to be done about it, except to arraign the gods who had denied him sons. But now it seemed there was everything to be done about it. He must procure for her a proper gymnastic instructor and hurry back home to attend to her education. Was she not his only child and the heir to all his wealth? Some day she would be sought in marriage and perhaps become the mother of his grandchildren.

He left Sparta next day and hurried on past Athens, although he had intended to see his friends again on his return journey. But when he came to the Isthmus, his fever had somewhat abated, and he felt he could not go north again without having achieved the greatest object of his journey, which was a visit to the oracle at Delphi. He meant to ask the god if his banishment would soon come to an end, for there were moments when he felt he could not endure it any longer. So he turned westward and travelled the well-worn path to Apollo's shrine. Arrived at Delphi, he stated his case to the temple officials, explaining that he wished to consult the god about his chances of being recalled. But on the actual day of the ceremony, his mind was in a state of supreme confusion. Early in the morning when bathing in the Castalian spring, later when, assembled with the other applicants in the outer courtyard, they were being sprinkled with holy water by the priest, during the procession along the Sacred Way to the Great Altar, while the sacrifices were being offered outside the laurel-wreathed door, and finally, when seated in the holy shrine itself, after watching the Pythia descend the rock-hewn steps into the underground cavern, he was conscious of having made a fundamental mistake.

It was not his recall to Athens that he really wanted, not even the chance to reinstate himself in the eyes of his country by exposing Cleon's villainy. It was a quiet room and uninterrupted

leisure, where he could sit and write the thoughts that buzzed through his head teasing him to distraction. Even at this moment, sitting here in the semi-darkness, while the ravings of the prophetess came up in hollow echoes from the vault beneath, he knew himself to be possessed of the god no less than she was. His mind teemed with speeches, eloquent, resounding speeches, that he meant to put into the mouths of the envoys to that first conference which had ended in the outbreak of war. The speeches had all taken shape in his mind without his conscious volition—obviously a direct gift from the god, whose will was now manifest: that he, Thucydides, should tell the story of this war, not because it had altered all the course of his life and sent him into banishment, but because it would have far-reaching and unforeseen effects on all the future of Greece. His own banishment was a mere incident. He felt ashamed ever to have worried the god about it. He should have asked for a blessing on his enterprise, this history he was going to write.

Just then he heard distinctly the voice of the Pythia pronouncing his name. Then a pause—and then quite clearly the words ‘a possession for ever—a possession for ever to be handed down to posterity.’

That was it. The god had answered not his question, but his unspoken wish.

Thucydides jumped up and would have left the temple then and there, but a priest restrained him. Not thus did one take leave of Apollo.

‘What further observances must I comply with?’ Thucydides asked impatiently, and an acolyte handed him a slip of parchment bearing the answer of the Pythia neatly done into hexameters—for a small fee of course. Lesser priests thronged round him offering to interpret the oracle, also for a suitable remuneration. The fact that it was obscure and contained no direct reference to the date of his recall only meant that the fees for interpretation would come a little higher.

Thucydides brushed them all aside, declaring that he was his own interpreter.

His mind was now clear. He had one purpose: to get home and continue his great work.

On his way through Thessaly he had the good fortune to fall in with an old friend, the philosopher-physician, Hippocrates, whom he invited to the farm on a visit. The two men rode into the

outer courtyard one windy spring evening and, finding no one about, went on round to the stables. The faithful Thrax was superintending the shutting up of the horses for the night and did not perceive the arrival of his master for some time. The attention of Thucydides was riveted on a tall figure wearing an old cloak and high boots of his own, but with bare head and cropped curls tossed by the wind. At first he had taken it for one of the stable boys, but it was becoming impossible to ignore the fact that this was his daughter, the weedy child over whose health and upbringing he had been fussing a short time ago. He stood rooted to the ground with shame, wondering whatever he was going to say to Hippocrates about it.

Pamphile for her part was entirely absorbed in her occupation. She called to the hens who were pecking about the yard, their tail feathers blowing about like frilly petticoats. The cockerel, seeing the strangers, sounded a note of warning, but the hens, seeing only Pamphile, ran up to her confidently, swaying their bodies from side to side with the motion of a camel. She scattered grain for the others on the ground, then stooped to feed Crossbeak from the palm of her hand. It was then that she saw her father.

She stood upright to greet him, and then remembered that he had come from Delphi and that the first words uttered after such an experience must come from him.

'This is my daughter,' said Thucydides, trembling with mortification.

Hippocrates smiled and bowed.

'Brought up on Spartan principles,' he said. 'My friend, I congratulate you. If only more of our Athenian fathers had your courage, there would be hope for our poor country yet.'

'You think it right for a well-born maiden to run about the yards like a farm-hand?'

'Obviously, since there is great gaining in health and no loss with respect to modesty.'

'Oh,' said Thucydides, somewhat mollified. 'She will find her tongue at last, no doubt. Come here, my-daughter-who-has-grown-up-into-a-young-man, and kiss me.'

'Tell me,' said Pamphile after greeting her father, 'what did the god say to you? Are you to be recalled soon to Athens?'

She had tried so hard to hope for this answer, but she knew she dreaded it.

'The god said I was to receive a possession for ever and hand

it on to posterity. How that is to be taken,' he continued mendaciously, 'I do not quite know.'

'I can suggest at least one way in which it might be taken,' said Hippocrates with another bow to Pamphile, who blushed this time and ran away to change her clothes, leaving Crossbeak volubly complaining about the interruption of her evening meal.

Hippocrates stayed some time and Thucydides read to him the notes he had compiled as a basis for his work. Hippocrates liked the contrast between Athens and Sparta in the opening chapters, but reserved his greatest admiration for the author's account of the plague which had ravaged Athens the second year of the war. Thucydides himself had been one of the very few victims who had survived the malady, and the scientific accuracy of his description appealed to Hippocrates as a doctor. He advised Thucydides to associate his daughter with him in his task as much as possible, so that her mind should receive development along with her body and a perfect balance be maintained. 'Otherwise,' he said, 'we shall fall into the mistake of Sparta, that of judging everything by material issues only.'

On the subject of Cleon and the question whether the brilliant indictment of him which Thucydides had prepared should be included in the history, Hippocrates was non-committal.

'The pros and cons seem to me about even,' he said. 'If history is a record of facts, then all facts would appear to be relevant. Cleon certainly deserves to be shown up in his true colours, for no man, with the exception of Pericles, has had such an effect upon our times. On the other hand, if your work is to be, as the god says, a possession for ever, it would seem superfluous to point out that meanness, jealousy and dishonesty are inherent in human nature. You would naturally prefer to stress those glories for which Athens is pre-eminent, and let her follies be forgotten. As for Cleon, even Aristophanes has said,

"Let that man rest below, where now he lies."

Come out for a stroll and let us see if the god will grant us a sign.'

Walking across the stable yard they were met by Thrax, his face contorted with terror, crying out, 'The plague, the plague!'

Following his excited gestures they found Pamphile gravely regarding a three-weeks-old chicken in the grip of some extra-



ordinary contortions. It seemed to be trying to burrow its head into the ground and at the same time, using its neck as a swivel, it was gyrating round and round at a terrifying speed. Its antics were certainly reminiscent of some of the symptoms evinced by people who had fallen sudden victims to the dreaded malady.

Thucydides' first impulse was to remove the source of infection. 'I'll kill the chicken,' he said. 'Since I have survived the plague myself, I am immune from re-infection.'

But Hippocrates interposed. 'I hardly think it is a case of plague,' he said. 'It may prove to be a mere influx of blood to the head, a kind of apoplexy. If you have the patience and courage to risk it, I would suggest moving the patient to a place of darkness and quiet with nothing but water for the next twenty-four hours, and to-morrow we will observe the result. What has the creature been eating? Anything besides corn?'

'It caught a baby mouse in the barn this morning and ate most of that,' said Pamphile.

'They're never any good once they start eating mice,' interposed Thrax, who had got over his fright and come back. 'You may as well wring their necks and be done with it.'

The instructions of Hippocrates were followed and for twenty-four hours the chicken became the topic of interest and Cleon was forgotten.

At last the hour of release arrived and Hippocrates went to unlock the door of its prison followed by the entire household, most of them at a safe distance. If the patient had caught the plague, he would undoubtedly be dead by now. If the complaint was apoplexy, there was a fair chance of his recovery.

Hippocrates set wide the door and Pamphile called, scattering grain.

A moment's tense silence, and then an unkempt little figure staggered into the daylight. His draggled feathers and uncertain gait proclaimed him both a rake and a scarecrow, a braggart and a drunkard. He waggled his head at his audience with a portentous solemnity which expressed more clearly than words his conviction that everyone was drunk except himself. Pamphile had only seen one drunken man in all her life, but the chicken reminded her irresistibly of that occasion.

'Oh, look!' she cried, 'isn't he just like Cleon?'

Thucydides turned to his friend. 'The god has given us a sign,' he said, and sent out his papers on Cleon to be burnt with

the rubbish. He felt so relieved about it all that he quite forgot to ask Pamphile when and where she had seen his old enemy.

Years went by and still the war dragged on. Thucydides lingered in exile writing his history and almost forgot what it was to have lived in Athens. His wife died and Pamphile grew up and was inevitably married. Her husband was a widower, an old friend of her father's and a steady supporter of the old régime. Pamphile was too good a Greek to confuse marriage with romance. She tried her best to settle down in Athens, but longed for the freedom of her days in the country and the feeling of dumb life around her. Her father missed her help with his work and got all behind.

And then quite suddenly the war was over, Athens shamed and defeated, under the heel of Spartan domination, and Thucydides received his recall.

What an experience to step across the threshold of his old home again after twenty years! And the first person to greet him was Pamphile dressed all in black because she was in mourning for her husband, who had just died. Thucydides had hard work to conceal his joy at the news, so glad was he to have her back again. Now they could get to work on the history, finish it and get it published.

But no one seemed to want to hear about it now. If ever he mentioned the war, they said, 'Oh, for goodness' sake let's talk about something else!' If he wanted to discuss public affairs, he was told that no one did that now in Athens for fear of informers. If he talked about his travels when in exile, he was told, 'Well, *you* have nothing to grumble about anyway!' as if he had been trying to grumble. Everyone seemed as if all interest, attention, sympathy, all power of thought even, had been squeezed out of them.

Thucydides suddenly realised that he had grown very old, that now he never would finish his history, that in fact he was going to die quite soon. Well, the greater part of his book had been written, and he had notes to cover the twenty-first year of the war. Perhaps that was enough to write about any war. It would preserve his name at least as long as Cleon's. He called Pamphile and gave her precise instructions. . . .

After his death, when the copies were announced as ready

for circulation, the work was found to contain no reference whatever to the author's banishment. The events relating to the loss of Amphipolis were expressed in the plainest possible narrative, not one word of excuse or self-pity, not a hint of the machinations of Cleon. Most of his friends borrowed a copy, some even went the length of buying one in their anxiety to see what he had written about themselves.

Some months later Thrax was standing in the outer courtyard of the farm gazing along the coastal road which ran westward to Thessalonica before dipping to the south. The level rays of the setting sun dazzled his sight, but he managed to make out the figures of two horsemen coming towards him. He clasped his elbows, hunched his shoulders and rocked his body in an agony of woe. The gods had found out about him, as he always knew they would. His master Thucydides was dead, the best master a slave ever had, and now some stranger was coming to take his place. Doubtless he would bring slaves of his own whom he already knew and trusted, and set them over him, Thrax, who would have to see the farm mismanaged and take the blame for everything that went wrong. Well, the good years lay behind him and now the reckoning was due.

The foremost rider dashed into the courtyard, reined up suddenly and swung down from the saddle with a well-remembered gesture. Then she pulled off her felt hat and shook out her curls.

'Your new master, Thrax! I've come to take possession in accordance with my father's will. I know what you'll say: "She'll never come to no good, she won't! Better wring her neck at once and have done with it."'

Leaving the old slave to struggle with his feelings, she turned to Xanthias who had followed her in, handed him a bunch of keys and waved him into the house.

'Come on, Thrax. Oats and water for the horses. I'll come round to the stables with you. I'm stiff with being in the saddle all day and not used to it.'

As in a dream Thrax took the reins over his arm and followed his mistress into the stable yard. He had not yet uttered a word. He felt it was a most unceremonious proceeding.

She stood there calmly watching him unharness the steeds just as she had done years ago when she was a little girl . . . and she married and widowed and come back again! It was clearly

time for him to say something—something propitious about her return and yet something calculated to turn aside the envy of the gods from happiness such as this.

‘The gods be praised!’ He choked the words out at last, adding hastily, ‘I suppose you’ll soon be taking another husband, though?’

‘I suppose so. How good to smell the stables again! Isn’t it time the hens were being fed?’

She filled the crown of her hat with corn from the bin and went out into the yard calling to the poultry.

The cockerel sounded a warning note, telling of the arrival of a stranger, but the hens came running to her swaying their bodies from side to side with the motion of a camel.

*THE VICTIM.*

BY E. HAMILTON.

MAKATOON was born in the stony, thickly bushed Sekukuni country. It was a big location, not yet so overcrowded that there was not a living to be got in years when the rain fell. Sometimes, though, there was a drought and consequent starvation in the round mud-and-pole huts. Then the people put belts of soft raw hide about their middles, and pulled them tighter and tighter day by day so that their bellies would not rumble and gripe them so much. The women hunted for roots and berries to make some sort of a meal for their children. Many of these roots were slightly poisonous. That is to say, if one ate much of them, diarrhoea and vomiting set in, but if one is hungry enough the possible consequences of eating unwholesome food do not enter one's head.

If the famine continued for a very long time the Government sent maize to keep the people alive, but long before the relief supplies arrived, the old and the weakly had perished. That, of course, was as it should be, but there was always the possibility that really valuable members of the community might die too. Besides, the normal thing was for rain to fall. If it did not, there must be some cause, and that, as a rule, was the anger of the Rain god.

The first thing, then, was to discover why the gods were angry. The women were questioned to find out if one of them had had a miscarriage, or given birth to a twin, or lost a child without burying the remains in wet ground. If that were so, then the tiny corpses were dug up and buried afresh in the mud of the river. The hole where they had lain was purified and usually rain fell.

Occasionally, however, the rites of purification were not sufficient to appease the Rain god. Clouds which had rolled up not soon after the ceremony of sprinkling the land with medicine made from a little of the contaminated earth, sailed away again without shedding a drop of rain. That was an almost certain sign that a sacrifice was required. The witch-doctors consulted the bones to find out what kind of victim was wanted. They did this carefully, studying the strewn bones for hours on end, for it might be that a human life must be given, and they wished to make no mistake.

When Makatoon was about three years old the worst drought that any could remember fell upon the land. In vain were the rain-makers called in. In vain were graves and rivers purified. The chief ordered a state of mourning and caused the women to perform their sacred dance which no man may see and live, but the naked, posturing female figures did not turn away the god's anger. Cattle died slowly, inch by inch, of starvation or of stomachs inflamed by eating unsuitable food. Human beings died from the same causes. Only the goats were fat. They leapt about the kopjes and krantzies eating plants which no other animal could digest. Their milk kept many a baby alive. From among them a huge black he-goat was chosen to be the sacrifice.

He was stabbed to the heart by a witch-doctor who was also a rain-maker. This man possessed a powerful charm which he had obtained from the Luvimbi people living far away in the north near the Limpopo River. The ingredients had all come from the sea. Sea water was used in mixing them. When the supply was nearly finished, someone had to travel hundreds of miles to the coast to procure fresh shell-fish, seaweed and water to add to the nucleus which was always kept back, as one keeps a little of the old yeast to add to the new. Luvimbi himself, the great chief who afterwards became king of heaven, had, before his death, bequeathed to his descendants the secret of making the charm. It was very potent indeed.

Nevertheless, there was some doubt in the minds of the witch-doctors as to whether it would work. Not all of them were sure that it was a goat that was wanted.

Three weeks later the land was still being tortured and burnt by a pitiless sun.

Mothers knew what that meant. At dawn each morning every woman counted her brood with a gasp of thankfulness when she found that they were all safe. But one day Makatoon's mother stuffed her hands in her mouth to stifle her screams. If her son were the chosen one she could not endanger the life of the whole community by making an outcry. She must bear her loss in silence. She tried to console herself with the thought that he would not suffer. He would be given medicine to stupefy him, and then, at the appointed time and place, one quick slash of a sharp knife would expose his heart and the entrails necessary for the rain-making medicine. She tried to feel proud that her son was the chosen sacrifice. Sometimes she succeeded. Then

she would remember how small he was, and the baby softness of him. . . .

The Native Commissioner, however, had had his eye on the Sekukuni country. He understood the customs of the people. He believed that hanging the slayers did little towards stopping human sacrifice. He knew that children were not killed wantonly, out of sheer barbarous cruelty, but because everyone firmly believed that upon their death depended the well-being of the tribe. For weeks he had been waiting and watching, and somehow or other he heard of Makatoon's disappearance. By noon he was sitting in the chief's courtyard.

He discoursed gravely about matters concerning the tribe. He told the chief that maize was already on its way to the location. He made arrangements for it to be fairly distributed. Then he said, quietly and very slowly :

'I want the child whom the bones have shown.'

He listened with polite attention while the chief told him, first of all that the bones had shown no one, and then that the boy had gone away on a visit and could not be found.

'Bring him to me,' he said at last, and sat quietly waiting.

'Lord,' stammered the chief, 'he is beyond my power. He is the chosen one. It is the indaba of the witch-doctors and the women.'

'I know,' was the reply. 'Nevertheless, I am the Commissioner. My power is greater than yours, O chief, greater than that of the witch-doctors or of the wise women. How else should I know of the child's going? Bring him to me, for I know where he is hidden and I do not wish to bring shame upon you by telling my Zulu constable to fetch him. Bring me the chosen one, for in a dream my ghost saw him and I shall know if you show me a substitute. Call your head-men and your witch-doctors as well, for I have something to tell you all.'

The sun had covered the greater part of his day's journey before the Commissioner's commands were obeyed. The white man showed neither anxiety nor impatience. He sat under the great council tree sipping tea which he caused to be made for him and smoking his pipe. When the meeting had assembled he rose to his feet and put his hand lightly on Makatoon's little woolly head.

'This child,' he said, 'I saw in a dream last night. My ghost tells me that the Rain god is no longer angry, nor does he desire

the sacrifice. Within three days rain will fall. I will take the child with me. Remain in peace. The sun sets.'

He got into his car and drove off, thankful that his bluff had been so far successful, and hoping that the weather forecasts which he had carefully studied before leaving his office would prove correct. Makatoon and his mother he kept locked in a room at the back of his house until a heavy thunderstorm bore out the newspaper prophecies. Then he sent them to join Makatoon's father, who was working in Pretoria.

There they lived for six years, until Mafavassa decided that he had had enough of work and it was time for them to return to Sekukuniland. His wife had never told him the truth about their sudden departure from the kraal, but it was not long before he learnt what had happened. Although Makatoon was then nine years old, he had never been received into the tribe. He was still, in the eyes of most people, the chosen one. Six months after his return he was missing.

He was old enough now to realise for what purpose the old women who took him away from his play in the mealie lands wanted him. Late that night he wriggled out of the hut where he had been imprisoned and slipped into the bush, running as fast as his trembling legs would carry him. Dawn found him still stumbling onwards, nor did he cease his flight until he had left the location far behind. A kindly Boer took pity on him and without making too many enquiries hired him as herd-boy.

He stayed on the farm until he was nineteen. Then the Native Labour Association recruited him for work on the mines. Once he had got over the fright of being shot hundreds of feet below the surface of the earth every day, he was happy. He was among men of his own people, for the mine officials knew better than to mix labourers from different tribes. He joined in songs and dances in the compound. At last he 'belonged.' The feeling was balm to his communistic heart. Sometimes, though, he had a dream. His ghost went from him and he knew that he was the chosen one. He would tell himself, on waking, that this was absurd. He was long past the age, for one thing; and for another, life in the compound was vastly different from life within the tribe. Nevertheless, in the back of his mind the knowledge persisted.

He did well at his work. Most of the other boys signed on for six months or a year. Makatoon had no home to which he



could retire for long holidays and no people to whom he must send his monthly wage. He worked from year's end to year's end and he saved most of his money.

The mine officials came to know and like him. Among the changing population of the compound Makatoon alone was a permanency. After a time the boys began to look upon him as a leader. Yet he was, in his own way, as quiet as the Native Commissioner who had saved him so many years earlier. He did not waste his breath on idle chatter, but when he spoke men listened to him.

He had been on the mines some eight years when Piet Wessels became his shift-boss. Wessels believed in keeping niggers in their place. He was short-tempered and heavy-handed. A shift under him was a torment of fear and pain. Makatoon, being strong and skilled, escaped lightly, though his companions, his own people, fared badly. He counselled patience, hoping that promotion might rid them of their persecutor. But drink counter-balanced Wessels' undoubted ability, and he remained a shift-boss.

The weary months dragged by. Makatoon's shift huddled together in the compound, nursing their bruises and their grievances. Some of the more lawless declared that they would set upon the *baas* and kill him. Afterwards they would say that a rock had fallen upon him, and they would take good care that no white man was near to give evidence to the contrary. Makatoon listened to all that they had to say, but he would not give his consent. He said it was foolish to risk so many lives if it could be avoided. The boys were kept in check as much by their essentially law-abiding natures as by his prestige. They waited until he should unfold his plan.

This he never did. Day by day he watched the white man's brutalities and night by night Makatoon's ghost went from him. He knew, now, why he had twice been spared the sacrificial knife. Yet he hung back, waiting for the final sign. At last it came.

He rose slowly from sleep. Slowly he walked across to the cage which was to take him to his destiny. When it had plunged him deep down, close to the heart of the earth, he took a sip from his beaker and made the water offering which is used by travellers or by chiefs who have trouble within their villages. He spat 'Pff' and prayed to the ancestor gods to make his road clear.

He picked up a jumper, walked quietly over to the boss and as calmly bashed Wessels' head in. He felt as though he had

done all this before, but he knew that the first time it was his ghost who had made the killing. When he saw that the *baas* was quite dead Makatoon gave himself up to the mine police, telling them what he had done. They would not believe him at first, for he spoke as though he were relating some everyday happening. However, they sent someone to investigate, and soon the mine was seething with the news that a shift-boss had been murdered by one of his boys.

'It just shows,' the mine manager remarked, 'that you can't trust these niggers an inch—no matter how good they may appear to be. Well, he'll swing, and that'll be an example to the others.'

The compound manager was puzzled. He knew which of his boys he could trust and he counted Makatoon amongst their number. Fluent as he was in the boy's own language, however, he could not discover what had induced him to turn murderer.

'If the *baas* was so hard on you, why did you not come to me?' he demanded.

'Master, how could I do that? The *baas* was one of Master's own people. . . . A man does not take the word of a stranger against that of his brother.'

'True. Yet I would have caused a watch to be set that I might learn which of you was at fault. Why did you do it? Were you drunk? Had you been smoking dagga?'

Even as he asked, the compound manager knew that the solution did not lie in the answer to these questions. Yet he did not understand the boy's explanation when it came.

'Lord,' said Makatoon, 'my people were in trouble. I *had* to do it. I was the chosen one.'

He used the word denoting a victim for sacrifice. The compound manager thought he saw a gleam of light.

'You mean *baas* Wessels was the chosen one?' he asked.

'No, master. How could that be? He was white. I am the victim. For this was I born.'

He went quietly away between his guards, and that was the nearest any white man got to the reason for his action. The young barrister who defended him 'Pro Deo' was nonplussed by his refusal to put up any reasonable defence.

'It almost seemed,' he told a friend afterwards, 'as if the beggar *wanted* to be hanged.'

Makatoon was sentenced to death and the compound manager expected trouble amongst the Sekukuniland boys. But he was a

wise man. When word came that the condemned wished to see one of his own people he allowed an old and trusted boy to visit the prisoner, although he knew he was taking a risk.

He was justified. After the messenger's return the boys settled down. Makatoon had fulfilled his destiny. His people knew now that he had never been really a part of them. They had looked up to him and followed him, but he was not a chief for whom they might have created a disturbance in the vain hope of saving him. He had never even been admitted into the tribe. His going would leave no gap in the community. The bones thrown by the witch-doctors twenty-five years earlier had not lied. Makatoon was the chosen victim. As such he went calmly to his death.

*Johannesburg.*

### THE YEAR IS DYING.

THE year is dying ;  
Our lives are passing :  
What do we think of that we have done ?  
What do we long for round the corner ?  
Where are we journeying ? And with what load ?—  
Does the pathway matter ?  
We cannot turn backward ;  
We must go to the end whatever it be,  
Into eternity briefly recorded,  
Into oblivion all forgot.  
Nothing endures but the exquisite sky,  
This limitless throne-room of God,  
The flight of birds, the spumy leap of waves,  
All Earth's untroubled bounty,  
Wind on the hills, and morning hope,  
Courage, and children's sudden laughter, and remembrance  
Of great love shared  
And kind deeds done.

GORELL.

## THE RUNNING BROOKS

- Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette before the Revolution* : Nesta H. Webster (Constable, 18s. n.).
- The Adventurous Life of Count Lavallette* : Translated by L. Aldersley White (Lovat Dickson, 10s. 6d. n.).
- Married to Mercury : A Sketch of Lord Bolingbroke and His Wives* : M. R. Hopkinson (Constable, 12s. 6d. n.).
- Hero of the Restoration* : Oliver Warner (Jarrolds, 12s. 6d. n.).
- Delius As I Knew Him* : Eric Fenby (Bell, 8s. 6d. n.).
- Arthur James Balfour : Volume II* : Blanche E. C. Dugdale (Hutchinson, 18s. n.).
- At War with the Smugglers* : Rear-Admiral D. Arnold-Forster, C.M.G. (Ward Lock, 12s. 6d. n.).
- Postman's Horn* : Arthur Bryant (Longmans, 10s. 6d. n.).
- The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal* : F. L. Lucas (Cambridge University Press, 8s. 6d. n.).
- The King's Crowning* : The Rev. Canon Robert H. Murray (Murray, 3s. 6d. n.).
- Our Sovereigns* : Osbert Lancaster (Murray, 5s. n.).
- Our Princesses and Their Dogs* : Michael Chance (Murray, 2s. 6d. n.).

THE characters of few historical personages have been so distorted, both by admirers and detractors, as those of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, Carlyle being among the more unscrupulous of the latter. Mrs. Webster's *Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette before the Revolution* is therefore a welcome addition to the many books dealing with the French Revolution, since her object is to prove, from trustworthy sources, that genuine goodness and an honest desire for the welfare of their subjects lay beneath the weakness of the one and the follies and frailties of the other. Mrs. Webster depicts two people more sinned against than sinning who, in extreme youth, were faced by a task the magnitude and complexity of which called for almost superhuman wisdom and strength. Both were singularly unfortunate in their friends and often in their advisers. But it is doubtful whether, had Louis been a great genius, he could have averted the Revolution whose seeds were sown and watered long before his birth.

*The Adventurous Life of Count Lavallette*—now admirably translated by Mr. L. Aldersley White—will always remain a classic example of how memoirs should be written. For, as its author

himself says in explanation of the omission of all scandals and 'dark secrets of the human heart,' 'monuments which endure are by no means erected on filth.' For twenty years the Count was in close contact with Napoleon, and his aim was to present his hero to posterity as he knew him, both in his weakness and his strength, and to make the portrayal impartial—a difficult task in view of his own unbounded love and admiration for the man who was at once his 'general, his sovereign, and his benefactor.' The author's judgment of Louis XVI, with whom he came little in contact, though his pity for that tragic monarch outweighs his censure, was the harsh one of his day. But what emerges clearest of all from these memoirs is the lovable personality of their writer, his simple charm, his unselfishness, his great capacity for friendship, and, above all, the unswerving loyalty which bound him to the Emperor even more closely in the days of disaster than in those of triumph.

Much has been written about that brilliant but dissolute genius, Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke, but hitherto little has been known of his two wives who, despite his unfaithfulness and ill-treatment, remained devoted to him. There was nothing else in common between Frances Winchcombe, the simple little rustic, and Marie Clare, Marquise de Villete, whose charm and wit made her the darling of the court of Louis XIV. To Frances fell the harder lot, for though in early days she probably mistook for affection the almost ironic courtesy her husband was wont to bestow upon her, this could only add to the bitterness of her final disillusionment. It is true that Marie Clare, forgetting all else in her infatuation for Bolingbroke, became his mistress at a time when both his finances and his reputation were at their lowest ebb, but she at least met with a reward denied to Frances. An added interest in Mr. M. R. Hopkinson's delightful volume, *Married to Mercury*, is the insight it affords into the lives of the great men of the time with whom Bolingbroke and his two wives were associated.

Mr. Oliver Warner contributed in January of this year an article on General Monck which attracted considerable attention; his full-dress biography of this *Hero of the Restoration* is just published. The author justifies his title and gives a good picture of that rare phenomenon, an honest turn-coat. An interesting chapter is devoted to General Monck's claim to authorship; it is of importance because it contributes to an understanding of the philosophy of

a soldier of fortune who came to be perhaps the most influential man in England at the time of the Restoration and who died as the first Duke of Albemarle.

Mr. Eric Fenby's study of *Delius As I Knew Him* is at times a painful because it is so extremely vivid an account of those strange and terrible last years during which he acted as the composer's amanuensis. It is the story of a young man's selfless devotion to stricken genius in which the enigmatic personality of Delius, both at work and in suffering, takes on a portentous significance in relation to the loneliness and nervous tension of life in the little household at Grez. Of his own amazing part in assisting the blind and paralysed composer to new creation and the completion of unfinished work, Mr. Fenby says only enough to suggest the intricacy, delicacy, and difficulty of his self-chosen task. A moving and absorbing book, written with simplicity and candour, in which the author's reticence is no less effective than his outspokenness.

It must be as great a satisfaction to Mrs. Blanche E. C. Dugdale as to the public generally that it has been possible for the second volume of her biography of her uncle, *Arthur James Balfour*, to follow the first so quickly—a fine rounding off, in both historical outline and intimate detail, of a work of outstanding biographical importance as well as a monument of love and intuitive sympathy.

*At War with the Smugglers* portrays, for the most part through the medium of his own letters, the life of William Arnold, Collector of Customs at Cowes, who was the father of Thomas Arnold of Rugby. From the correspondence of which the greater part of Rear-Admiral D. Arnold-Forster's interesting book consists, he appears to have been not only a most conscientious servant of the Crown, but also to have shown great ability in introducing improvements which rendered the work of the Revenue officers less arduous and risky, and his private life reveals the source of those high ideals and practical genius which characterised his more famous son.

It is to be hoped, enchanting as is Mr. Arthur Bryant's *Postman's Horn*, that the charm and interest of the work he has here so ably carried out will not lure him from the eagerly awaited completion of his great trilogy on Pepys—a loss too severe to be contemplated with equanimity. In the meantime, however, there is this skilfully compiled and annotated anthology of late seventeenth-century letters, in some sense an appendix to its editor's 'The England of Charles II,' and designed to re-create the 'common

background to a past existence' and 'the common mind of a vanished age.' In this purpose it succeeds more admirably than any learned treatise on the period could possibly do. For the stuff of life itself is in these pages, in their loves and laughter and distresses—a rich store-house of entertainment and instruction.

Mr. F. L. Lucas, who, in addition to his well-known ability as a critic, is himself a poet of no mean distinction, is also a clever writer of short stories, as his contribution to the present issue of CORNHILL shows. His latest volume, *The Decline and Fall of the Romantic Ideal*, is an exceedingly erudite study which, though its appeal must necessarily be greatest to those whose literary and classical backgrounds have been intensively cultivated, cannot fail to attract the general reader also by reason of its brilliantly epigrammatic manner and the wealth of knowledge and scholarship underlying it. For the specialist it is very likely to be a work of provocative interest. For the layman it is a delight as an essay in technique.

Of three books which will undoubtedly make a wide appeal to the reading public, both on account of their subject matter and its vivid treatment, *The King's Crowning*, by Canon Robert H. Murray, is particularly apposite. It is a fascinating volume which not only gives a detailed account of the Coronation Service, but also its history, as well as an explanation of the various ceremonies and their symbolism. Not the least interesting section of the book is that which provides intimate glimpses of our later sovereigns and of the personal relations between them and their people both at home and in the Dominions. *Our Sovereigns*, by Mr. Osbert Lancaster, is illustrated by both pen and coloured portraits of all the English sovereigns from Alfred the Great to Edward VIII. The specialised knowledge of history on which this brief summary is based is particularly valuable, and the book should be read alike by young and old. Mr. Michael Chance, in *Our Princesses and Their Dogs*, reveals, mostly in pictures of a charming simplicity and vitality, the intimate personal life of a father and mother and two young children with their four-footed playfellows—a record whose delightful informality makes it difficult to remember that its subjects are members of a Royal household.

## SOME OTHER RECENT BOOKS.

*Ideas and People The Private Life of a Dramatist*: Clifford Bax (Lovat Dickson, 10s. 6d. n.).

A volume of reminiscences—personal, theatrical, and concerning cricket. Discursive, dignified and entertaining.

*Gladstone To His Wife*: Edited by A. Tilney Bassett (Methuen, 15s. n.).

Extracts from letters written daily over a period of fifty-five years.

A valuable contribution to personal and political history.

*The Clear Mirror: A Pattern of Life in Goa and in Indian Tibet*: G. Evelyn Hutchinson (Cambridge University Press, 8s. 6d. n.).

A record of impressions made upon the sensitive mind of an artist and thinker in a strange and unusual environment.

*Gods of To-morrow: A Journey through Asia and Australasia*: William Teeling (Lovat Dickson, 12s. 6d. n.).

A stimulating account of a journey undertaken to acquire first-hand knowledge of the conditions of workers in the British Empire and the Far East.

*Handicaps: Six Studies in the Uses of Adversity*: Mary MacCarthy (Longmans, 6s. n.).

Mary Lamb, Beethoven, Arthur Kavanagh, Henry Fawcett, W. E. Henley, and R. L. Stevenson seen against the background of their mental or physical disabilities.

*Freedom, Love and Truth: An Anthology of the Christian Life*: The Very Rev. William Ralph Inge, K.C.V.O. (Longmans, 12s. 6d. n.).

Deals with the practical and mystical life of the Christian. Extracts drawn from religious, scientific, agnostic, and other sources.

*The Gardener's Companion*: Edited and Illustrated by Miles Hadfield (Dent, 7s. 6d. n.).

The Week-End Book of Garden History, Literature, Botany, Humours, Tasks and Enjoyments. Learned, practical, and comprehensive.

*Game Fish Records*: Jock Scott (Witherby, 12s. 6d. n.).

Individual and official records from the principal rivers, lakes and sea-fishing grounds of Great Britain, most European countries, and the other side of the world.

*Mr. Pinkerton Has the Clue*: David Frome (Longmans, 7s. 6d. n.).

Well up to the author's standard, if a little inadequate as to motive and a trifle over-taxed in ingenuity.

*Antiqua, Penny, Puce*: Robert Graves (Seizin-Constable, 7s. 6d. n.).

Fantasy, satire, malice aforethought? A strange excursion into philately and family feuds by the author of 'I, Claudius.'

M. E. N.



## THE 'CORNHILL' COMPETITION.

### DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 158.

THE EDITOR of the CORNHILL offers two prizes of books to the value of £1 from John Murray's catalogue, to the two solvers of the Literary Acrostic whose letters are opened first. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, 50 Albemarle Street, W.1, and must contain the Coupon from page 14 of the preliminary pages of this issue. They must reach the Editor by the 30th December.

' ——— my pen has ——— my teeming brain,  
Before high-piled books, in charact'ry,'

1. ' ——— from heaven, in azure mirth,  
It kiss'd the forehead of the Earth ;'
2. ' Owning her weakness,  
Her ——— behaviour'
3. ' Nor mix with Laian rage the joy  
Which dawns upon the ———,'
4. ' O Phil——— fair, O take some gladness  
That here is juster cause of plaintful sadness !'
5. ' Spreading ——— and scattering ban,  
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,'
6. ' Yes : in the sea of life ———,  
With echoing straits between us thrown.'

Answer to Acrostic 156, October number : 'To YONDER ARGENT Round'  
(Tennyson. 'St. Agnes' Eve'). 1. 'YeA (*The Tempest*, Act IV, Scene 1) 2.  
OveR (Keats : 'Song of the Indian Maiden'). 3. NothinG (Suckling : 'Why  
so Pale and Wan ?'). 4. DiE (Herrick : 'To Anthea'). 5. EveN (Sir Walter  
Raleigh : 'The Conclusion'). 6. River-girT (Shelley : 'Hymn of Pan').

The first correct answers opened were sent by Miss Enid Glen, 21 Arundel  
Gardens, W.11, and Miss I. M. E Hitchcock, 5 Lewes Crescent, Brighton, 7.

*Note : Solvers need give only the uprights and lights.*

# Leaves from the Jungle

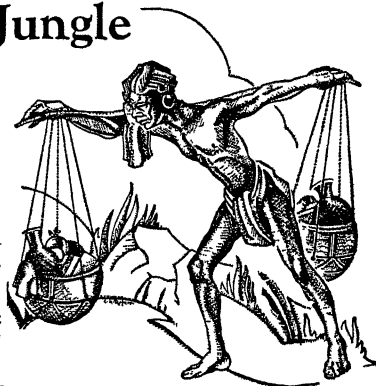
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—*The African World*.